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The Woman of Samaria.

BEING THE
SUBSTANCE
OF A
DISCOURSE

DELIVERED AT
SCALES in YORKSHIRE,

In the YEAR 1752.

By JOHN CENNICK.

Ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the Waters,
Isa. lv. 1.

The Spirit and the Bride say come, and let him that
heareth say come, and let him that is athirst come,
and whosoever will, let him take of the water of
Life freely, Rev. xxii. 17.

THE FOURTH EDITION.

LONDON:

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Woman of Samaria.

“ Jesus said, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water,” John iv. 10.

THIS verse is taken out of the notable conversation of our Saviour with a woman of Samaria. He was sitting by the side of a well when she came to draw up water; and as it was his office in the world, and the intent and design of his becoming man, to seek and to save such as were lost, he began to open to this woman his mind, and first asked her for a little water: The woman, seeing that he was a Jew, wondered at such condescension, for we are told “ the Jews dealt not with the Samaritans,” and asked him, how it came to pass that one of his religion could stoop to ask water of a Samaritan? And this gave our Saviour the opportunity to tell her, “ If thou knewest who it was that saith to thee, give me to drink, thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water.” Had the woman had ears to hear, this would have been the best news that ever she had heard; and indeed I look upon this place as one of the most encouraging parts of all the word of God to a sinner, and worthy

to be attended to with the utmost seriousness and with all our hearts.

I design to make some observations on the whole history of this conversation of our Saviour with the woman, and speak of the words which I have singled out for the text in its place.

We are told, that when our Saviour was disposed to leave Judea, and return to Galilee, "he must needs go thro' Samaria," not only because there was no other way, or because he could not have conveyed himself into Galilee by means of his divinity or otherwise, but love and mercy obliged him to go that way. He knew there was a poor wicked woman living in Sychar, who was a slave to her whoredoms and her lusts, and in the high road to perish, and therefore he would go that way, that he might call her to the faith, as well as many of her fellow-citizens and neighbours, and be their Saviour. Thus the Shepherd seeks out his wandering flock, and saves and brings back such as were lost.

When our Saviour had sent away his disciples to provide meat for their journey, and had reached Jacob's well, he sat down weary there, about the middle of the day, having yet, perhaps, tasted nothing. How particular is the scripture! it says, "he was wearied with his journey" when he sat down; to teach us, that he has experienced our weakness: And now every poor wayfaring man on the road, every peasant, every workman, may think when they are fatigued and tired with their journey or work, that our Saviour has been tired this way. He knows how to pity me, since he has felt weariness, and knows what fasting and hunger is. It should comfort the traveller and tradesman, the farmer and labourer, to remember, once Jesus sat weary down on the well, and put them upon thinking,

ing, O thou dear Master of thy people, thou Lord of all, thou hast felt our weariness and weakness, have mercy upon me, and let it obtain a rest for my soul in the kingdom of God, when the days of the years of my pilgrimage are ended.

O forget not, that once the good Shepherd of Israel walked about the world, and his limbs and feet were often tired and weary when he came down to seek and save you, like sheep that he had lost. He travelled on foot and was fatigued, that you might be carried home in his bosom; he was a pilgrim in his own world, to purchase for us, "a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

While he was resting himself, the woman came with the water-pot to fetch water from the well; and now Jesus said to her, "Give me to drink;" the woman wondered at his request, because he was a Jew; but doubtless the angels of heaven wondered more, to see the Creator ask a little water of a creature. This was indeed great humiliation, and should make us loath all pride and highness, all resentment and haughtiness for ever.

Here a poor suffering man, a person who is reduced to want and penury, may also be comforted, since God his Saviour once was poor in the world, and asked an enemy for a little water. Thus we read, he was another time so hungry, that he would have been glad of a few figs to stay his hunger, when he sought it at a fig-tree but found none.

We cannot be poorer, meaner, more hungry and thirsty, or reduced, than he stooped to be, whose poverty shall make us rich in this world, and in that which is to come.

The Samaritans and Jews had no dealings together, because of their differences in religious matters, and that made the woman wonder most, because

cause a Jew would speak to her. She little thought that the Lord of Jews and Greeks was sitting before her, who both loved those in Jewry and those in Samaria, and was come both to make one fold under one Shepherd. Here we may learn how ill and weak it is to suffer our prejudices so high as to reject any one because his religious sentiments differ from ours. If our Saviour had not more patience with us than we have with one another, or did not love us better than we love one another, we should none of us be saved at last; but he pities and bears with us in our mistakes and failings, and judges not according to our insight into points of doctrine or manner and form of worship." His eyes try the heart and the reins," and where he is beloved, there all is well.

The Jews believe the temple of Jerusalem was the right place of worship, and therefore cried, "The temple of the Lord! the temple of the Lord!" The Samaritans thought the mountain of Samaria, where Jacob worshipped, was the right place, and would not receive the prophets because they worshipped in Jerusalem, and only adhered to the five first books of Moses, and their boast was, "The mountain of the Lord! the mountain of the Lord of hosts!" This made such a division between them, that they of Samaria hated the Jews; and the Jews, when they could give no worse name, called men Samaritans. Here we may see what mischief bigotry and zeal for one's own church or party can make in a land, whereas often the real difference is not material, nor can be, where both sides heartily believe in Jesu's divinity, and are partakers of his Holy Spirit in their hearts; and however we may think otherwise, we shall find in that day souls with the Lord, "redeemed out of every nation, kindred and people, and tongue, who have all washed their robes

robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, and therefore shall they stand before the throne, and go no more out." If none could be saved but as are allowed to be right by all sorts, then none would be saved at all. Let us then have patience with one another in religious matters, and know, that whoever persecutes, or is bitter, is wrong, let who will be right; and such a spirit, whether for or against our party, much not be encouraged, for it cannot be of Christ. When the children of Israel, at their great festivals, went up to worship at Jerusalem, they went up in their tribes and families apart, and perhaps mingled not till they entered the temple, and then all joined in one solemn rejoicing and prayer. All had their eyes to one offering, adored one God, and were properly one flock; so now the different companies of christians go up apart, and all retain their little peculiarities; but when the whole shall enter the New Jerusalem, I mean all out of every congregation and tribe, who have believed in Jesus and are saved, we shall blush that the best have been so ignorant and mistaken, and agree for ever and ever to worship and give glory to the Lamb that was slain, and his one great offering, his merits and love, shall be the subject of our one song when time is no more. Now let us who have found mercy remember, we are one man's sons, we have one Father, one Saviour, one faith, one baptism, one sincere view, namely, to love and live only to him, and let us see that we fall not out by the way.

We may learn yet one thing more from the woman of Samaria's wondering that Jesus, a Jew, would speak to her, and that is, if she could wonder when she only looked on him as a man, how much ought we, who know he is the "high and lofty One who dwelleth

dwelleth in the high and holy place," and yet condescends to speak with sinners, and this he does even now: What he says to her he says to us, "If thou knewest who it is that speaketh with thee, thou wouldest ask of him, and he would give thee living water." Had she indeed known her Lord and Saviour was there, or guessed that the Stranger with whom she was speaking was no other than the same God who aforetime so met her father Jacob, and blessed him, she would not have been long before she had prostrated herself at his feet with tears, and obtained of him water from the well of life; she would have asked of him, and he would have given it to her: but she did not know who he was; she thought, as many in our time do, that he was only a man, and not God blessed for ever, for else both she and they would make all their prayers to him, till all had found in him eternal life: Therefore, because she understood him not, she reasoned what water he spoke of: she said again, "Thou hast nothing to draw with, the well is deep, from whence hast thou this living water? I hope thou dost not think thyself greater than our father Jacob that gave us this well, and drank of it himself, his children and cattle." Here we may see what she thought of Christ, and these her mean thoughts were the only cause of her being so far from receiving eternal life at his hands. Our Saviour perceived her ignorance and stupidity, and yet willing to save her, said, "Whoever shall drink of this water shall thirst again, but whoso drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst, but the water that I shall give him shall be in him, a well of water springing up into everlasting life." One should have thought, however dull and unawakened she was before, she could have understood that he spoke of somewhat divine and heavenly;

heavenly; but she was still the same, and thought perhaps he had some water which had the peculiar quality to stay the thirst, and therefore asked it of him, but did not receive it because she asked amiss, and neither did her heart thirst or feel the want of his redemption; but she wanted the water only to save her the trouble of coming so often to the well to draw; and when she had said this, our Saviour altered his manner of speaking, and bid her "go and fetch her husband." He was not angry at her great stupidity in spiritual things, nor was displeased because she was such a stranger to the scriptures, wherein is so frequent mention of living-water; but he pitied her, and indeed she needed pity, "for the god of this world had blinded her eyes," and stopped her ears; nor did our Saviour thus behave for her sake alone, but to teach us, the servants of the Lord must not strive, but be meek and gentle, and patiently labour and watch for souls, "as the husbandman waiteth for the early and latter rain;" so neither when he was about to convince her of her sad condition (for she was then living in uncleanness and whoredoms) did he begin roughly, or thunder against her the curses of the law, but meekly said, "Go call thy husband and come hither;" the woman answered, "I have no husband; Jesus said, thou hast said well, for thou hast had five husbands, and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband, in that saidst thou truly." In this tender manner he brought her under convictions, and told her of her sinful and unchaste life, and forces her, as it were, to feel he was no common person; for she, struck with the answer of our Saviour, said directly, "Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet;" and as it is likely she had often wished to see one who could satisfy her which was the right place of worship, she now proposes it to him,

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and then he assured her, that although the Samaritans were to blame, and that the "salvation should come out of the Jews," yet he told her, "neither in Samaria, nor at the temple, but in every place where such as worship the Father in spirit and truth are, that is the right place, and such the Father seeks to worship him." Hence we are taught, that it is not our form or mode of worship, nor is the place wherein we are met, or the words or order used therein, the main thing in pleasing God, but the inward and true worship of the heart; "he requireth truth in the inward parts." A good form is commendable, but to love the Lord our God with all our hearts, and be really devoted to him, and to have our bodies his chaste and clean temples, and to know him there through the Holy Spirit, is more than all other things, and far weightier in his sight.

The woman, though a little enlightened, was still ignorant who she had with her, and therefore said, "I know Messias which is called the Christ cometh, when he is come he will tell us all things." Now our Saviour's hour, and the time of her conversion was come; for he said to her, "I that speak unto thee am he." I dare say, that moment God the Holy Spirit opened her eyes and her heart, and she saw and believed on him. Doubtless she was overcome with joy and love, without remembering she was a woman, or thinking what people would say, she left her water-pot, she forgot what she came to the well for, and went and told the men of her city, "Come, see the man that told me all that ever I did, Come see the Christ." Thus when any have found our Saviour in their hearts, they want to call, if possible, all the world to him, and even for this they would be content to undertake any labour, and go through any difficulty, and think themselves
happy

happy, if only they can bring one more to be acquainted with Jesus.

We do not hear that the woman asked any more questions about the living water, or blundered any more about the person of Christ. Her heart now felt what it meant; she was a witness that a soul that has drank of it shall thirst no more; it led her so far, as to forget a little while her lawful business, that she might bring others to the Fountain of life, and let them also see him and be saved. I suppose, when she went into the city she told her people, Rejoice with me, for I have found the Lord, I have found the King of Israel, the Christ, who should save his people from their sins; especially methinks I see her telling the man with whom she had lived an adulteress, O come with me, and as we have been fellow-servants of sin, let us share pardon together; I have met the Messiah that told me all that ever I did, and laid all my sinful life open before me; he mentioned my guilt and sin with thee, and bid me call thee to him; come then, he has pardoned and washed me, he will do the same for thee. I am sure the same living water which gave her eternal life, washed away her sins, and quenched her lusts for ever. She could no more live as she had done, but now was invited to be the spouse and bride of the Lamb. To this day it is the same; for as soon as any have found mercy, they can no longer love sin, but they bid an everlasting farewell to all: The very thoughts of their mis-spent life, and of the pain Jesus has endured to expiate it, the remembrance of his grief and tortures, makes them loath their pleasures, their company, and all their lying vanities. Oh, they think, I have done with you for ever, you pierced my dear Master through; you have mingled him the direful cup of wormwood and gall,

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you have heaped many sorrows on his heart and put him to grief; you have set him at nought, reviled, and crucified my Beloved, and robbed me of many days and years of real happiness; but now I am saved, I am delivered, and will go back no more.

As soon as the woman came and told her people the glad tidings, many more came through her means, and when they had heard Jesus they also believed, and he stayed with them two days preaching his gospel among them. Then they said to the woman, "Now we believe, not because of thy word, for we have heard him ourselves, and know that he is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world." Happy men! Happy souls! who can say this, We know the Christ the Saviour of the world. This is life eternal; This is the greatest blessing we can enjoy in this world. O that all here could say with them, We know the Christ! We know the Saviour of the world!

But the time forbids me to add more to these observations, I will go on to speak of the text, for what was spoken to the woman of Samaria is spoken to us and to our children, and we as well as she are eternally concerned. No doubt you must think the woman and her fellow-citizens happy to have had the Lord so nigh to them, and to feel his eternal life like a well flowing up in their hearts; but then you may be happy along with them, the Lord will be as nigh to you, if you ask him he will give you the living water.

The words naturally divide themselves into four parts, which I shall speak of as they are set down.

First, Our Saviour says, "If thou knewest the gift of God, then thou wouldest ask of him." He means the gift of eternal life, and therefore calls it a gift, lest she or we might be tempted to suppose it was

was bought, or deserved or merited by any thing we can give. It is elsewhere called the free gift; and the kingdom, the salvation, the grace, and mercy of God must so be preached in opposition to all the false notions in the world of being received and pardoned, or obtaining heaven by our obedience, service, or good works. God gave his only-begotten Son. Jesus gave himself for us. He gives the living water. He gives it freely, and sells it without money or without price, and all who ever come to heaven or obtain salvation, must be witnesses that it was given to them. This is necessary to be known of all men, because some have sought to enter the strait gate, and have not been able, therefore, because they sought it as it were by their works, and did not know the gift of God. But who knows it is free grace and a free gift, and are enlightened to see their own unworthiness and unprofitableness, such, like poor vile beggars, come to Jesus, who is the door of mercy, and the very gate of heaven, and there they beg and are relieved. Our Saviour will have us feel and know we have done nothing but what would merit eternal judgment, lest after he had vouchsafed us mercy we should think, by a sober life, by meritorious deeds to have deserved it, and so we be found spiritual thieves and robbers, who have robbed the Son of God of his due praise and honor. It is well therefore that the holy Spirit gives us thoroughly to see ourselves, and makes us groan under the weight of our misdeeds and thirst for mercy, that to all eternity we may glorify the Lamb, who in our distressed and lost state gave us peace and loved us freely.

But the second part of the text is, "If thou knewest who it is that saith unto thee, Give me to drink, thou

thou wouldest then ask that gift of him, and he would give it thee."

Many souls perish for want of knowing who Jesus is: They regard him only as a prophet, or as one of the highest or greatest of the martyrs, or perhaps an angel, or one somewhat beneath or less than the Lord, and this is the most dangerous error in the world. Believe of him what you will, if you do not believe that he is the true God and Lord, you will never be the better for him. It is this alone makes his humiliation and sufferings so weighty and desirable, and brings the soul to trust upon him. What is his obedience more than the obedience of Noah, Job, or Daniel, if he be not God? Or what is his blood more than the blood of the martyrs, or the blood of bulls and goats, if he be not the Jehovah, the everlasting Son of the everlasting Father? If one jot or tittle of all the bible is true, then is he who talked with the woman of Samaria, and who sat wearied with his journey down upon Jacob's well at Sychar, the Lord from heaven, the very and essential God. When this is once known, with what boldness can one venture upon his death, and with what confidence trust his blood, and adore and stand astonished at that love wherewith he loved us, at that love which so humbled him even to the death of the cross, that he might save us from death eternal who were vile dust and ashes. This doctrine is as true as amazing and strange: the Creator and Lord of all did leave the bosom of his Father, and was made lower than the angels for the suffering of death. So great was his love to sinners, that he left heaven to seek and win them back to himself; so great his pity, that rather than see them suffering the vengeance of eternal fire, he chose to be a burnt-offering on the tree, and bleed and die in our

room and stand; therefore said he to the woman, "If thou knewest who speaketh with thee, thou wouldest ask him, &c." O! had she known what an Almighty God sat by her, she would not have behaved so coldly, she would have sunk down before him, and said with greater wonder than when she thought a Jew would vouchsafe to speak with her, How is it that the Lord my God deigns to speak with me? She must have broke out like her father Jacob, "How dreadful is this place! God is here, and I knew it not!" Or said, "Lord, what am I, or what is my father's house, that thou shouldest shew such mercy to thine handmaid!" Or had she known what a dear Saviour he was, how much he loved sinners, how tender and merciful, she would have prayed him, O Lord Jesus, dost thou ask water of me? To, heaven and earth are thine, and of thine own I will give thee joyfully; but I beseech thee give me better water, let me drink of that river which flows out of the throne, and makes glad the city of God, and he would certainly have given it to her: He would have said as he did once to another poor woman, "Be it to thee even as thou wilt;" for, for that purpose was he come, and therefore "must needs go through Samaria."

I may say the same to all you who hear me preach, if you knew who Jesus is, you would ask him, and he would help you. If you knew he was the Lord God Almighty, you would think then, why do I tarry any longer? what though my sins are red like scarlet, he can make them like wool; and though they are like crimson, he can make them like snow. What horrid guilt, what cursed nature cannot he wash and make clean! If all the sins of the world were laid upon one soul, a single drop of his sweat, one precious drop of his blood could make him in a moment

moment fairer than an angel of God. Nor is he able or mighty to save only, but he is willing. His mercy is as great as his majesty. When a certain leper in the days of his flesh prayed him, "Lord, if thou wilt thou canst make me clean;" he answered, "I will, and immediately his leprosy was cleansed," and this he did for our sakes, that we may venture to come to the throne of grace boldly, and obtain mercy in the time of need. If the worst people in the streets, the most polluted strumpet or hardened rebel, knew who Jesus is, if they knew he was their loving and gracious Lord, they would turn to him and be saved. If the doubting and melancholly, whose hearts are continually oppressed and troubled with fears and jealousies, did but know him, they would soon be happy; but no man, no human creature can believe him so loving and almighty as he is. We learn what we know of it through the teaching of the Holy Ghost. Before I leave this part of the text, I must observe, that though many innocently wish to have lived in his time, that they could have been with him, and so have asked and got from him eternal life and salvation: They need not so wish, for he is as verily and indeed as near to us as he was to the woman of Samaria. Unbelief hinders us to see, as it did her for a time; nor need we go a step to find him: He is present with us when we lie down and when we rise up, when we go out and when we come in, and many thousand times has called and invited us to drink freely of the water of life. It is a mistake that one must be in the church, or on our knees, or busied in some religious duty always, if we would find the Lord; for this woman was doing the business of her house, and going to draw water for her use, when Jesus made himself known to her. You also may be industrious
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and busy as you please, only, while your hands are employed in the earthly things, let your hearts be lifted up to the Lord. Speak with him as if he stood before you, and you shall find him nigh to you, and not a God afar off.

I come now to speak of the third part of the text, and that is, "Thou wouldest have asked him." i. e. If thou knewest who I am, then thou wouldest pray to me, thou wouldest apply to me, and I would give thee thy desire. There are some men in the world who think it is not right to pray to our Saviour, but to God by his means, as they term it; and this is because they do not know him; they do not think who Jesus is, and therefore are afraid to pay him divine honour and worship as the true God: but as I said before, whether they be learned or unlearned, rich or poor, the reasons of their scruples is, because they are ignorant of the scriptures and the power of God, and as long as they do not know who Jesus is; they worship, as our Saviour told the woman, "they know not what." All prayers have been made to Jesus throughout the scriptures, therefore nothing is more common than to meet with expressions of this kind, "Lord Jesus, have mercy upon me." He properly hears prayers, and is the person to whom all flesh must come, and every knee bow. He gives eternal life, and accepts the prayers of the needy. It is a blessed doctrine and true, "Whoever calls upon the name of the Lord Jesus shall be saved. There is no other name given under heaven whereby men can be saved. There is salvation in none other." It is his own doctrine, "If thou knewest who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water." And again, "Come to me and I will refresh you." - Ask me,
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and I will do it for you. Let others who cannot trust our dear Saviour, nor believe him to be their true Lord, pray to an unknown God, but ye brethren, be ye christians indeed, and ask of the God by whose name you are called, and you shall find, "he hears the poor when he crieth, the needy, and him also, that hath no helper." I do not doubt but many of you that are here, though you have read and heard this part of the scripture often, have never yet asked of Jesus for the living water, nor perhaps to this day known what it means; for had you known and asked it of him with your whole heart, you would have found it in you springing up unto eternal life, he would have given it to you. Ask it now, and henceforth speak to the Saviour of this thing, that you may drink and live for ever, and not lose so precious and divine a gift for want of asking.

I come now to speak of the last words in the text, namely, "And he would have given thee living water." None ever came to him as perishing and undone, but he was their Saviour; or as weary and heavy laden, but he gave them rest, or as thirsty and in want of his blood, but he gave them freely: and for this end did he open his wounds, that the rivers might flow upon him that was thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground. For this reason was he, the Fountain of living waters, stricken of God, that his blood and water, his sweat and tears might become salvation to the world, and a well of life.

The Holy Ghost is properly meant by the living water in the text; for when Jesus stood and cried in the last day of the Feast of Tabernacles, "If any man thirst, let him come to me and drink. He that believeth on me, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water," it is said, "this he spake of the spirit, which they that believe on him should receive."

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It is the Holy Ghost that manifests Christ to our hearts : It is he that takes of the things of Christ, and shews them to us, and by this means the blood of the Lamb flows up in our hearts, and he is to us what the rock which Moses struck was to the Israelites, like as that yielded them streams in the desert, and in the land of the wilderness, where there was no water, and is in us as a well flowing up to eternal life. All the merits of Christ, his tears and bloody sweat, are by him conveyed to us, and we drink of this brook by the way, and lift up our heads. He it is that will never leave nor forsake us, till he has led us safely to our own good land above, but day and night refreshes us with this water, or rather with this wine, "till we drink it new in the kingdom of God."

This Holy Spirit our Saviour gives to all that believe in his name, and without him we cannot be happy here, nor hereafter.

Come, then, all ye who hear me to-day, come ye to the waters, Jesus and his Spirit invites you. Draw near to that God and Lamb, and ask him, and he will give you to drink abundantly, nor let him rest till you have found it, to his eternal glory, springing up in you to everlasting life. Amen.

F I N I S.

A H Y M N.

1 **A** Rock the Hebrew army track'd,
Thro' which (as water streams they lack'd,
And shadow in the heat)
They were with shade and streams supply'd;
This rock was Christ; the shade his side,
The streams his bloody sweat.

2 When high the stormy billows rise,
When clouds prevent the clearer skies,
My soul finds here a rest;
A hiding place till all is o'er,
Five caves are made secure and sure,
Where happy I am blest.

3 So when I thirst, or fainty grow,
From these five caves five rivers flow
Of water and of wine;
Of this I taste, and 'tis so good,
I strait have help, it drinks like blood,
And stays this soul of mine.

4 Within this Rock my soul descends
A thousand sacred rarities,
The cleft where Moses was,
When he the Father's glory view'd,
The back-part of the unseen God,
As thro' transparent glass.

5 On this eternal Rock is grav'n
The names of all who go to heav'n;
Here one may see his name
So deep inlaid with sweat and blood;
That whoso sees it cries, 'twas hew'd
By my beloved Lamb.

6 Who curious is, and wants to be
A witness of these truths like me,
Let him the Lamb believe;
And trust his soul upon the blood
That trickled from the Son of God,
When late he ceas'd to live,

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The First Principles of Christianity.

BEING THE 2
SUBSTANCE
OF A
DISCOURSE

DELIVERD IN
The North of IRELAND,
In the YEAR 1752.

By JOHN CENNICK. *K*

THE FIFTH EDITION.



LONDON:

Printed and sold by M. TRAPP, No. 1, Paternof-
ter-row, near Cheapside. 1791.

THE PRINCIPLES OF CLASSIFICATION

BEING THE

SUBSTANCE

OF A

COURSE

DELIVERED IN

THE NORTH OF AMERICA



THE FIFTH EDITION

LONDON

Printed and sold by M. Taylor, No. 1, Tottenham Court Road, London, W. 1.



HEB. V. 12.

Ye have need that one teach you which
be the Principles of the oracles of
God.

HOEVER is acquainted with this
epistle to the Hebrews will easily ob-
serve, that all said there of Jesus Christ's
eternal Godhead, of his being the crea-
tor, the upholder, and heir of all things, and his
being above all angels, heavens, prophets, &c. is
to magnify the doctrine of his atonement, which
is throughout treated of in such a manner as is
not beside in any part of the Bible.

The author makes all the priests, laws, sacri-
fices, the temple, and even the sacerdotal vestments
and ceremonies to be shadows only of the Redeemer
and his offering himself up like a lamb, by which
he makes perfect all them that are sanctified.
Hence it is that he esteems all the other doctrines
only as the first principles of Christianity, and little
in comparison of this which he calls perfection;
because this made perfect the salvation, and finished
iniquity, made an end of sin, brought in everlasting
righteousness, blotted out the curse and its cause,
opened the gate of heaven, reconciled the world
to God, destroyed death, spoiled him that had the
power of it, that is the devil, and obtained eternal

redemption for us; so that properly, above all other doctrines, this deserves to be termed the doctrine of perfection, as it is many times called by the apostle in this epistle, but particularly when he says, "therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, namely, the laying the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith towards God, of the doctrine of baptism, of laying on of hands, of the resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment, let us go on unto perfection;" from which time he goes on to speak of the new covenant in the blood of Christ, of his priesthood and sacrifice, when he offered up his own body once for all, by which, he saith, "we are sanctified and perfected." Also, in the course of his doctrines, he shews, how little effect the daily sacrifices, sprinkling of the blood of bulls and goats, &c. had on those who attended on such a worship, seeing they did not make them perfect; for, he says, "If perfection was by that priesthood, then there would have been no need of another priest to come after the order of Melchisedech;" but he concludes, "the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did," and that Christ crucified is the true doctrine of perfection.

We must not, however, despise the first principles of Christ; they are sacred truths, and lead and point to his atonement, as the steps led up to the temple. Of these, as they are mentioned in this epistle, I will speak in a particular manner, and begin with the doctrine of repentance from dead works.

All works done without a living faith in Christ must be reckoned dead, for they are so in the eyes of him with whom we have to do. Chiefly all the works of the flesh are dead, namely, idolatries, blasphem-

blasphemies, swearing, idle jesting, and songs of the drunkard, lies, uncleanness, whoredoms, murders, thefts, banquettings, pleasures, covetousness, anger, revenge, envy, railing, injustice, cruelty, &c. These are all dead works, and are the fruits of dead men who have never been quickened by Christ Jesus. These have sprung out of a dead and unbelieving nature; and those who do such things, all lovers of the world and the things of the world, are dead to God while they live.

This is easily consented to by the serious and more devout part of mankind, and since they avoid the danger of running into these, think themselves safe; and especially if, on the other side, they are exercised in works of piety, fasting, alms, prayer, reading the scriptures, going to church, &c. but herein is also danger; for till we are made alive by the Holy Spirit and adopted into God's family, we also are dead and our works dead works, and must be repented of as well as our known sins. Whoever is not born again, is at best but a servant in God's house, and "a servant abideth not in the house always, but a son abideth always;" let him value his work as much as he pleases, and let it be highly esteemed among men, yet where they have not been done out of a heart wherein the love of God is shed abroad by the Holy Ghost, they are not good works, and are only set up in the room of Christ; and because of this, they are in the sight of God an abomination. There are many serious and sober people in the world who are quite ignorant of the righteousness of God revealed by faith, and who cannot trust the blood and obedience and tender mercy of Jesus Christ, and therefore try to make a righteousness of their own works, and comfort themselves that they are
better

better than others, setting up this for the cause of their acceptance above, and so run into gross idolatry, and depend and trust the works of their hands, "which is the abomination which makes desolate," standing in the stead of Christ, where it ought not. All this is building upon sand, and what must fall before the throne in the day of trial; they are dead works, and not built upon the Rock. However such people may think well of their lives and works now, yet when our Saviour shines upon them and enlightens their eyes to see and judge righteous judgment, they will find so much pride, wandering, ostentation, selfishness and sin mingled in their holiest deeds, that they will be ashamed of all they have done, and lothe and abhor themselves for esteeming the best work or most commendable action they ever did better than dross or dung, and repent heartily of their pride and self-conceit.

The prince of this world has found means to deceive in every thing, and in nothing more than in the doctrine of repentance; for generally no more is meant by it by people of our time, than leaving gross sins and changing a wild and wicked behaviour into a life of sobriety and religion. There are indeed a few who carry the matter farther, and allow of no sound conversion unless the sinner has been first awakened and alarmed with the terrors and thunders of the law, under which he cries out and is affrighted exceedingly, so that he does not only leave off his sin, but trembles day and night for fear of God's judgment; and this is called by divines legal repentance, and often wears off entirely, as in the case of Esau, Pharaoh, and others, who for awhile were very penitent, but afterwards grew worse than ever.

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In this manner drunkards, whoremongers, rioters, and sensualists of all kinds repent. When they have gone further than ordinary in sin or fallen worse than usual, for awhile they cannot speak for tears, are ashamed to lift up their heads; they make vows to be better and tremble, like Balaam when the angel met him with his sword drawn in his hand; but, in a day or two, they turn again, "as a dog to his vomit and as a sow that was washed to wallow in the mire;" and this last state is worse than the first. Or perhaps they satisfy themselves in abstaining from outward sins, without coming to Christ crucified and obtaining pardon and a new heart from him, and so nothing farther is the fruit but a moral life; and still, though they have a name to live, like the church of Sardis in the Revelations, they are dead and without the Son of God in the world, and so without life. True and gospel repentance goes far more abundantly, and is, like faith, a divine work of our Saviour, who was exalted to give repentance to his people. A penitent man is one to whom our Saviour has called as he did to Saul, and arrested him as it were with, "Why persecutest thou me?" Such stand astonished before God, and can neither eat, drink, or sleep in peace; they have obtained such a sight of sin in their own natural heart, body and soul, and in all they have ever done, that their spirits sink and fail, and with a thirst and longing for mercy unspeakable, they turn and look towards him whom they have pierced and mourn for him. Nor can they take pleasure any more in the world, or in their former company or delights, the Lord has mingled wormwood and gall with every thing, and now they would give the world to be assured that Christ has forgiven them: They are in Peter's

ter's case after our Saviour looked upon him, their very inmost heart and soul is melted, they weep and sigh continually, and have no rest till they have got a rest for their souls.

If you would know what repentance is current before the Searcher of hearts, it is that which is learned at the foot of the cross, and begins at the death of Christ. No one has a right sense of sin but by looking to Jesus, or rather by Jesus's looking upon him; there he sees what sin is, and that it could not be purged away but by the blood of God; there is known what a displeasing and hateful thing it must have been, that it so oppressed and weighed down with intolerable pain and anguish the only begotten of the Father. When the Holy Spirit leads a sinner to behold the Lamb, and shews him how his sins tore and grieved him, how it afflicted and bruised his soul, and made him travail like a woman in her pangs, he forsakes forever all his sin, sinks down and begs for pardon; he loves the Saviour, he is overcome and sick of love; he mourns and languishes for his salvation and righteousness, and attains it to his heart's joy forever. This is a repentance from dead works, a true evangelical repentance, not to be repented of.

A second Principle of Christianity is faith towards God. This also has been mimicked by the deceiver, and men have learned to say I believe, who do not know what they mean. This has been the reason why consenting to a divine truth, such as the mystery of the Trinity, the divinity and miracles of Christ, &c. has been called faith, whereas all professors of orthodox Christianity have this, who nevertheless may be strangers to that faith once delivered to the saints. This faith,
which

which is called here "faith towards God," and in other places "faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ," is a certain work of the Holy Ghost in the heart, whereby the possessors of it lay hold on redemption, and appropriate the Lamb and his merits and righteousness to themselves. It is the very evidence, witness, and possessing of our Saviour who is unseen, and brings with it blessedness, peace, life, and the kingdom of God.

According to the scriptures, a man cannot be a believer without being born of God and having eternal life in him. Nor is any thing in the New Testament more clear, or oftener asserted, than that "whosoever believeth in Jesus Christ, shall be saved;" and this experience proves true, for none have perished finally who believed; they, already, have a heaven upon earth; it is the very means whereby they escape the curse of the law, are saved from wrath to come, and live and die happy. As dear children so do they believe the scriptures, depend firmly upon the promises, are obedient to their heavenly Father, and, without wanting to define the mystery or to have it explained to their understanding, they believe Jesus is God from everlasting, and the same with his Father and the Holy Ghost; they believe his chaste and miraculous conception and birth, his doctrines, and death instead of his people, and that in our weak flesh and blood, he who was Jehovah very and true God, did suffer, bleed, die, rise again and ascend into heaven, where he is bodily and with his own blood in presence of all the spirits of just men made perfect, and in the sight of all the holy angels.

But they believe more; and herein they differ from such as profess the truth, or have the form

of godliness, and speak sound words, but are without the power; for they know our Saviour, they have peace with him, they have got absolution and pardon from him, they have his righteousness, they have his Spirit, they have the foretaste and earnest of their everlasting inheritance. This they enjoy by believing, and as surely as if they lived by sight; I mean, as surely as if Jesus walked about with them, talked with them, as if they lay down in his arms, as if they saw him. Faith is the soul's senses; it sees Jesus, hears him, tastes how good he is, follows him by the savour or smell of his good ointments, feels his love, and to all intents and purposes they are saved. There need not be said much about it, "for whoso believeth, hath the witness in himself;" and though he has not seen Christ, he is blessed in believing in him.

This is the faith once delivered to the saints; this is the one faith, which the prophets and fathers had, who before-hand saw the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow, and were themselves partakers afar off in his salvation; for having had his righteousness imputed to them, they walked with God, received the "witness that they pleased God, they died in faith, and God was not ashamed to be called their God." By this faith Isaiah, Hezekiah, Joshua, David, &c. knew their sins were forgiven, they were assured the Lord was their salvation, and "that he had made with them an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure."

By this faith the apostles and disciples, cotemporary with our Saviour, were persuaded of his divinity, notwithstanding they were witnesses of his weakness, shame and death. They received the Holy Ghost hereby, knew their names were written
in

in heaven, obtained grace to persevere, and though they saw their Lord no more after his ascension, "they believed in him and rejoiced with joy unspeakable and full of glory." By this faith the primitive christians and martyrs endured all torments, sufferings, and deaths: they saw him that was invisible; they knew he dwelt in them, they found his salvation, and felt his love and eternal life. In this faith all the many millions of believing souls, who have departed out of the world since Christ in peace and comfort, were enabled to meet their last hours with courage; they had experienced his grace; they found him near to them; they saw his merits and wounds, and were healed thereby; they felt he had taken away the sting of death, and were confident he was their Saviour, and had loved them and would love them to the end; so they believed and so proved with exceeding great joy. Such a faith as this is worthy of its blessed author Jesus, by which "he manifests himself to us his children as he does not unto the world," and for which we shall love and adore him to all eternity. This is the faith of God's elect. This is the faith whereby we overcome the world, and what is meant in the text "by faith towards God and our Lord Jesus Christ."

Now I come to speak of baptism, which also is another of the first Principles of Christianity. There are many sorts of baptisms, and neither John or the disciples of Christ were the first who introduced it; for even under the law baptisms were frequent. When a priest entered his office, he was first baptized. The beasts also in the sacrifices were baptized or washed. Solomon had appointed the brazen sea and the laver for this purpose: all cups, bowls and vessels were thus washed, and

these all were shadows of the true baptism. St. Paul does not scruple to say, that the Israelites were baptized in the cloud and the sea unto Moses. The like St. Peter says of Noah and his family in the ark, &c. John's baptism was a peculiar sort, for he baptized all in Jordan that came to him and confessed their sins, and this was termed the baptism of repentance; but he constantly confessed it was not the true baptism: for, said he, "one cometh after me mightier than I, whose shoes latchet I am not worthy to unloose; he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire." Our Saviour submitted to this baptism of John, which proved nevertheless it was from heaven and of divine institution; and thus he submitted to every ordinance of the law, and to this short dispensation which came in between, that he might fulfil all righteousness. Multitudes were obedient to John's baptism, for all Judea and Jerusalem and round about Jordan were baptized of him; but Jesus's disciples also baptized, and it seems had more came to their baptism than John, though Jesus himself did not baptize with water. This sort of baptism, as well as the preaching of the disciples, which was, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand," was much the same with John's, and lasted till the night wherein Jesus was betrayed, and then he instituted a new kind of washing or baptizing, and this was when he took water and washed his disciples' feet; and however little it may seem to many that this was done, it was certainly weighty in his eyes; for when Peter would have been excepted, out of a sort of humility, the Lord told him, "Except I wash thee, thou hast no part in me:" this done, he said to them, "Now are ye clean;" and even ordered them to keep

keep up the same thing among one another, though he told them, "What I have done to you now, you do not know, but hereafter ye shall know." The primitive christians kept up this sort of baptism or foot-washing among them, and even some congregations and little churches of Christ renew it now with a religious order, care and simplicity, as well as other ordinances of their Master, with his blessing and presence.

Our Saviour mentions yet another baptism wherewith he was to be baptized, and was straitened till it was accomplished. This happened to him the same night in which the former was instituted, and was a baptism of water and blood, when the fiery wrath drank up his spirits, and put him into such a distressing ferment that his sweat fell down from him like great drops of blood, and made his raiment look as if he had dipped it in wine; with this we are to be baptized; and this like fire shall eat up the rust of sin, and burn up all our filth, and devour all other fires, and whatever else has not been right in our Redeemer's sight. But this must be spoke of in its place, namely, when I speak of the baptism of the Holy Ghost.

The day of our Saviour's ascension he ordained his baptism in these words: "Go and make me disciples in all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo! I am with you always to the end of the world."

I think there is no room to dispute that he ordained water, since after his departure Philip went down into the water and baptized the Eunuch, and Peter used water when he baptized Cornelius and his house; but then it must not be esteemed merely
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a John Baptist's baptism, or only a water baptism; (the primitive church held such accursed who affirmed this) but the authority in which it is administered must give it great weight, and make it important to us. Lest the world or rash lightminded men might think the apostles and ministers of Christ baptized disciples to themselves, or as John had done, or lest it might be esteemed human or only a bare ceremony, Jesus sent them to administer it in the name of the blessed Trinity: they were his plenipotentiaries and ambassadors, who had their authority from the King of kings, and might act in his name and in his Father's name, and in the name of the Holy Ghost. This solemnity has no precedent in the scripture, and much less has any such been used in performing ceremonies or shadows; nor indeed was there a need for it; but, to put it beyond the reach of doubt, our Saviour promised they should not celebrate this divine mystery without him, "Lo! I am with you to the end of the world." There was such a dependence upon this promise of our Saviour among his first ministers, that they made no doubt of having him present in the administration of baptism; and they not only found it so by happy experience, but preached it as a sure doctrine to all who became concerned about their salvation, or asked, "What shall we do to be saved? Believe and be baptized, and you shall be saved;" and this was also first taught them by their chief Apostle and Bishop on the same day in which he was taken up, as I have before observed. St. Peter assures the awakened souls of this, saying, "Repent and be baptized, and ye shall receive the Holy Ghost." Ananias does the same to Saul when he had found him in that low and poor state in Damascus, "Arise, saith he, and be baptized, and wash away

away thy sins." The same was done by Saul, when he was converted, to some men in Ephesus, whom he asked, if they had found the Lord? "Have ye, said he, received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?" They answered, "No, we have not heard of it." He asked again, "Then how were ye baptized?" They said, "John baptized us;" and he immediately taught them, that John's baptism was indeed with water unto repentance; that they should believe on him which should come after, namely, on Christ Jesus, and these, in number about twelve, were baptized again unto Christ, and received the Holy Ghost. Besides these, there are abundance of instances in the scriptures of the presence of Jesus visibly and sensibly felt in baptism: his Spirit has quickened in that hour those buried with him in baptism; and his blood and pure water has washed away their sins at the very time of the washing in his name. The accounts of the conversion of the Eunuch, of the jailor at Philippi, and others, are proofs of this truth, and may not be slighted. But here two things to be observed, first, that the baptism of Christ was to be given to such who believed, and therefore he said, "First teach them, make them my disciples, then baptize them:" so when the Eunuch desired Philip to baptize him, he told him, "if he believed, he might be baptized;" and, on his confessing his belief in Jesus that he was God, Philip went down into the water with him and baptized him; and wherever persons received baptism in faith, they have found it done to them accordingly, they have been baptized into Christ's death, and dead and buried with him to the world, and risen again to life eternal with him, and received of him the adoption of sons and the new name. Second-

Secondly, we may observe, all are not sent to baptize; some run and say as the Lord saith, when "as I live, saith the Lord, I have not spoken, I have not sent them." St. Paul himself confesses, "Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach." I think therefore, whoever baptizes shall be convinced of his commission from the High-priest, that he might act in faith with cheerfulness and authority, and depending on the promise of our Saviour's presence with him, lest he should bring the holy ordinance into contempt, and make it at last merely ceremonial. That has been too much the case in great part of the christian world, and the light manner in which baptism has been treated, both by the ministers, and also by such as received it, has stumbled some religious and pious minds, and they have at first slighted the sacrament of baptism, as it is now called, and at last spoken against any thing of that kind, and only looked to the end, or spiritual part of it: however such are to be blamed, yet it will not say they are wholly in fault; for let a person only seriously weigh how light a matter the doctrine of baptism is to many of those who contend for it, and how, after all their strenuous arguments for it, they at last believe it a mere ceremony, a shadow, a sign, and nothing real, but deny as stiffly the gift of the Holy Ghost, the washing from sin in this life, &c. and then judge how little difference there is in fact between them that use it, and those that use it not.

But the case is much otherwise, when one believes the promise of God: there Jesus and his spirit, with blood and water, do invisibly what is done visibly by the minister, who only acts like an ambassador of a prince; he uses his Master's name and knows what he does, and what "he binds upon earth

earth is bound in heaven, and what he looses upon earth is loosed in heaven;" what he washes in the name of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, that the same God washes; and whom he buries with Christ, in water, in the name of Jesus, is done by Jesus, and shall be found so in the day of judgment.

But so much also is true: a minister sent to baptize, and called of God as was Aaron to the ministry of Christ, may baptize, and the person baptized may lose the blessing of baptism, and remain unsaved; carnal and unconverted. This was the case between St. Philip and Simon Magus; for, after his baptism, Peter tells him, "I perceive thou art yet in the gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity," and adds, "thy money perish with thee." In such cases faith has been wanting in those who were baptized, and I do not know if the promises can be proved to be made otherwise than to him that believes. Therefore I blame all who press the submitting to ordinances without understanding what they want, or what our Saviour would have, but lay the whole stress upon doing the thing; whereas that was not the mind or intent of our Lord God and Saviour: he who looked upon circumcision in the flesh as no circumcision, where it was not done in the spirit, the same looks upon baptism as no baptism where the baptism of the Holy Spirit is slighted, and the washing from sin neither wanted, nor sought, nor expected at all. The same might be said of praying without the heart, of which God complains in Isaiah, or going to church and mingling with the children of God, without being really joined to the first-born, and having obtained the adoption, or singing words without the Spirit and the understanding, or hearing preaching with the

ears closed like the deaf adder, and dead to the voice of the Son of God within.

The modes of baptism have been different; some have been baptized in rivers, others in houses; some churches have used a pouring-out of water in the name of the Lord upon the catechumens or candidates for baptism; others again only sprinkled them, using the words our Saviour had appointed: so again some have baptized only on the forehead, others on the head, others on the breast; and some only once, others, and that from the most ancient customs, three times, and this was called the Trine aspersion, viz. once at the naming of the Father, once at the naming of the Son, and once at the naming of the Holy Ghost. We may not despise any of these forms, because the aim to please our Saviour and do his will may be pure and right in his sight, and we may safely conclude he did not therefore appoint the exact mode of baptism, lest we should have been tempted to have rested in the performance of the true and scriptural form, and neglected the chief thing, which is the baptism of the Holy Ghost, and without which all the rest is but of little effect.

The primitive christians made very much of the doctrine of baptism, and saw how evidently God wrought thereby, and revealed himself to such as were baptized in his name. Hence they were so careful whom they admitted to baptism, and the care and diligence with which this matter was carried on, and the due respect and reverence shewn out of the heart to the ordinance of our Saviour, was an inexpressible blessing to the first ages of the church; would to God it had still been retained in a right spirit, and then that sacrament had not been so common or so profaned as we see it daily is. But
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however happy the first christians were in this respect, they certainly carried the matter too far in a few centuries, and began to doubt if even a child, dying without baptism, could enter heaven; and this in latter ages became a doctrine in the western churches, who, without any foundation in the scripture, now assert they cannot be saved. It is plain that many hundreds if not thousands of believers, both men and women, have suffered martyrdom for Christ who never were baptized; these, they say, were baptized in their blood, as well as the children Herod slew, &c. but this is a forced conclusion and would not stand good always, since some have been strangled, burnt, &c. but the truth is, they were saved in believing, as all are.

But to return. There are others who insist that the candidates for baptism should be immersed or plunged into the water, and this no doubt was the ancient way, and best resembles the burial of the body and soul into the death of Christ, and is retained yet by several congregations in the world, and in particular approved of and commanded by our English church*; but as the form in this respect has not been expressly set down in the Bible, we should do wrong to break the peace of the church of Christ, in contending too violently for a matter not essential to salvation.

The most essential things relating to the form seems to be the water, and the baptizing in the name of the blessed Trinity; and yet even in the apostles' time we find many were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus; and we cannot say that the disciples used any other words or name when they baptized or preached it as necessary; and since the whole fulness of the Godhead dwells bo-

* See the rubric in the office of baptism,

dily in Jesus, I judge a person baptized in his name is truly, and according to the scriptures rightly baptized; and if we think otherwise, we must question St. Paul's baptism, those at Ephesus, and those baptized by St. Peter; for who can be ignorant that so they taught, "be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus," and so acted, since frequently we read, "they were baptized in the name of Jesus Christ?"

Besides all I have said of the different forms of baptizing, I may yet add, that in the same manner other circumstantial things in the act of administering this divine ordinance have varied too; for though the apostles observed no such custom, yet many very early baptized only from Easter to Whitsuntide, unless in cases of great necessity; some dressed the baptismal candidates in white, others warmed the water in which they were baptized, others used oil, salt, &c. mingled with the water, and in the times of superstition many of these were made necessary parts of baptism; whereas indeed they were introduced by men in different ages of the church, some out of conscience, and some as typical of things unseen. Such as were for baptizing only from Easter to Pentecost, did it because from the time the Lord rose and breathed on his disciples, to the time of that general effusion of the promise of the Father, the Holy Spirit had been given. Such as dressed the candidates in white raiment, did it to denote they were washed and made white in the laver of regeneration, and were now cloathed with the white linen of Christ's righteousness. Again, such as warmed the water, did it to signify the warm blood and water that came out of our Saviour's side, which was always esteemed the fountain of the sacrament. The anointing with oil was to show their being anointed kings and priests to God,

God, &c. But however innocent all these things might have been designed originally, where any dependence or stress is laid upon them, they are better abrogated, and the plain, simple and apostolical way is the best.

There is yet much said in the same manner of the above, in behalf of the different modes of baptizing. Such as defended the use of sprinkling, or aspersing, pouring of water, &c. use the words of Ezekiel, "I will sprinkle clean water upon them and they shall be clean:" and, in Isaiah, "I will pour water upon them; I will pour floods upon the dry ground:" so in Joel, "I will pour out of my Spirit." Such as baptize upon the head, look on it as the antitype of the old anointing, and have esteemed it as a crown and glory to the receivers of it. Such as baptize on the forehead, do it because it is the seal of discipleship, and we are said to be marked on the forehead with the mark of the Lamb, whose badge and mark this should signify. Such as baptize on the breast, can also urge that place as most proper, being the very seat of the heart and so comprehends much, since all is received and enjoyed in the heart. As I said before, so I say here, that it is a pity any of these lesser matters should be disputed with heat, since they are not the substance, and may be conscientiously used by all the different sorts of professors of Christianity to the glory of the Lord Christ.

But there is yet a weighty matter to be considered, and that is the baptism of infants and children, of which we have no direct precedent or example in the scripture, and which practice is so severely censured and reproached by many religious people. I know the chief arguments brought in defence of this are, that as circumcision inaugu-
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rated and ingrafted into the Jewish church, so does baptism into the church of Christ; and therefore as infants were ordered to receive that sacrament, which St. Paul calls "a seal of the righteousness of faith," so can infants now receive baptism, since they are children of faith or children of believers, and were not begotten or born in the impurity of unbelief, but in the holiness of faith. Besides this, the promises being made to us and our children, and our Saviour's saying, "Let the little children come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God;" besides the accounts we have in the scripture of whole families being baptized, as the household of Stephanus and others, in which it may be reasonably supposed there were children as well as adults. But the best that can be said of all is, that without doubt children are capable of receiving the blessing of Christ, and when parents bring them to him, in faith, to receive his blessing, they must not be forbid.

It would be sinful to ask, What benefit can a new-born babe receive, who neither hears or understands the gospel, nor has a will or power either to believe or disbelieve the doctrine of Christ? For this would be really to think like the disciples, who therefore forbid the people to bring their children to Christ, and for which Jesus was displeased, and assured them, they could receive the kingdom of God; and that so passive and like clay as a little child is, so must every one become who would enter into his kingdom. Jeremiah was sanctified in the belly, John in his mother's womb, and could leap for joy when Mary and Elizabeth saluted each other, being filled with the Holy Ghost. The question therefore must not be, If the infants are able to receive grace and the Holy Spirit? for that is a true doctrine,

doctrine and clear and confirmed in the scriptures; and if Jesus saw their faith who let down the paralytic through the roof before him, and forgave the man, made him his son, and healed him, he can see their faith now who bring their children to be washed by him, and do the same gracious acts as he certainly does, and will by no means disappoint those who have believed in him: "It shall be done to them according to their faith;" and Jesus will be with them to the end of the world who minister in his name and faith, and will faithfully preserve and keep all such as have been committed to his care, or dedicated to him and washed in water, according to his holy word. Let such answer for it who lightly and wantonly have either meddled with baptism, or exposed it to contempt in the world; for as it is possible to receive the Lord's supper unworthily, and bring judgments upon our heads, so can men receive and administer unworthily and to equal hurt the sign of the baptism of the Lord.

What I have occasionally mentioned in this discourse, namely, the inward washing of the heart, and the cleansing our bodies with pure water out of the side of Jesus, is the true and only baptism which avails; and though without the outward washing of water a child can be saved, yet without the baptism of the Holy Ghost no man can be saved. We must be baptized with the baptism wherewith our Master was baptized, the same blood and water which overstreamed and covered him in the garden must sprinkle us from an evil conscience, and wash us body and soul. This is a baptism of fire; this must burn and eat up all the dross and corrupt affections in us; and with this water and blood God gives his Holy Spirit in our hearts, like a fountain springing

Springing up into everlasting life : he pours it out upon us, and anoints us his kings and priests : he brings with him the blood of Jesus, and washes us in heart and spirit throughout, so that he can say, Ye are clean. Without this, all boasting of being baptized by the best men, in the best form, and in the most pure church, will stand us in little stead. " If I wash thee not, saith our Saviour, thou hast no part with me." This doctrine then of the baptism of Christ is weighty when administered in faith, and brings with it the seal and sign of the regeneration of the Holy Ghost, and is not a carnal ordinance or device of men, but is from above, and the immediate appointment and order of God our Saviour, and must be reckoned among the first Principles of Christianity.

I come now to speak of the laying on of hands, and this is twofold, first, the laying on of hands to bless in the time of baptism, and this was formerly called confirmation; and secondly, the laying on of hands in sending out ministers into God's husbandry, of both which I shall speak particularly, and first of confirmation.

Our Saviour used this laying on of hands himself, not only in healing some diseased people, but when he took up the children in his arms, he laid his hands upon them and blessed them. He did the same in effect when he lifted his hands over them and blessed them at his ascension. But the apostle used it frequently. Ananias laid his hands upon Saul, and at once he received his sight and the Holy Ghost. St. Peter and John laid their hands on such as had been baptized in Samaria by Philip, and they received the Holy Ghost. Also St. Paul did the same to some in Ephesus, and when he had laid his hands on them, they received the Holy Ghost. This was
the

the custom of the primitive church, and though in form they have not been exactly the same, yet almost all the churches have retained it, and believed that by laying on of hands the blessing of Jesus Christ is given and the Holy Ghost. Some churches lay on hands and confirm the baptized person immediately, and others defer it till a time of riper years, and this has been the custom of our national church at this day. There are other churches who lay on hands before baptism, and claim thereby, in the name of the Lord, the soul to be his property and the redeemed of his blood. Some churches receive members into their communion with the laying on of hands, and in the same manner bless the sick, the penitent, and departing souls; and since the scriptures have declared this sort of blessing a principle of Christianity, and have not said how often or at what time it should be done, we cannot with safety condemn this use in the churches of Christ, but what appears most apostolical and according to the scriptures must be esteemed the best, and all the rest may be allowed very good, when done in faith and in the name of Jesus Christ.

The laying on of hands for appointing ministers, &c. in the church is of another sort, and though not always absolutely necessary, yet of divine institution, and is now called ordination. We know, though Aaron, Joshua, and others were sent with the laying on of hands, that the same Lord in the Jewish church sent many prophets and ministers who had no such ordination, nor were Levites, or called as Aaron to the priesthood, nor were they the first-born of their mothers, &c. but some were shepherds, herdsmen, gatherers of sycamore, fruit, &c. out of different tribes chosen and sent, as the Holy Ghost pleased; and thus it has been since in the christian

church, for therein first Jesus sent out his apostles and seventy disciples to be his ministers, but the manner in which he ordained them was properly by his breathing on them, or pouring out his Holy Ghost upon them. Though before either of these things were done at his word, they had gone out, preached, healed the sick, and baptized; but for all this, his sending them was warrant and authority enough. These afterwards used the laying on of hands in appointing the seven deacons at Jerusalem. So St. Paul himself and Barnabas were in like manner sent out by the church at Antioch with fasting, prayer, and the laying on of hands, and this was done at the commandment of the Holy Ghost. Gifts suitable to the office of servants of God have been bestowed in the use of this laying on of hands, for so St. Paul writes to Timothy, "Neglect not that gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery." Again he says, "Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee, by the putting on of my hands;" and he desires Timothy first to try such as are preachers, and not lay hands suddenly on any man. This doctrine of the laying on of hands at the sending out of ministers, like the confirmation and baptism, has been differently administered; some have thought, because Paul mentions the laying on of his hands, that bishops only have the right to ordain, but others have observed, several laid their hands on the deacons and on Paul and Barnabas, and also the presbytery ordained Timothy, for which reason they had believed the latter more scriptural, and thought the former a sort of usurpation of bishops, and almost all the Reformed and Protestant churches are of this mind; but there are yet others who

who minister and have not the laying on of hands, and these find out instances enough in the scripture of men that have so done, such as Apollos, and those scattered abroad at the persecution, who went every where teaching and preaching the word. Also St. Paul says, "All might preach," and, like Moses, wished, "all the Lord's people were prophets." A regular ministry ordained with laying on of the hands of men full of faith and the Holy Ghost, is and must be a great blessing to a christian church, especially where men so ordained are inwardly moved of the Holy Spirit to take upon them that office, and who, not for lucre, or of constraint, or for honour, or with any view but to serve the church and flock which God purchased with his own blood, take the oversight and charge of souls; for without this, the laying on of hands is a good sign, but it profits nothing. At the same time that an orderly and regular minister may be good, and save many heats and confusions in a congregation, yet it would be dangerous to condemn or hinder any who with sincere views preach the gospel, and propagate the faith of Christ to the salvation of souls, though they have not been sent of men, for God sends by whom he will send, and all who are rash in censuring their mission, must take care lest they be found opposing Christ and fighting against him, who by foolish people and mean and base things will save them that believe, and destroy and bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. The meanness of a preacher does no more prove that he is not sent of God, than the apostles being poor fishermen would prove they were impostors; nor their being not regularly brought up and educated for the ministry and ordained thereto, is any more a reason they are deceivers and false teachers, than the

disciples were such, because they were not trained up in the school of the prophets, or called as was Aaron. Let therefore all so act and so do, that with a conscience clear and undefiled they may finish their own course of labouring in the church; and if others in different way preach Christ, let them rejoice and hope the best, since "man shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased, and many be made wise to eternal life."

I shall now speak of the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, for that is yet another principle of Christianity. That the dead, small and great, just and unjust, shall rise again and come to life through the resurrection of Jesus, is fully asserted in St. Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians; and our Saviour himself taught it: "All that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and shall come forth." So the prophets have constantly taught, "those that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake;" and therefore is God called the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, because though they are dead, he knows they shall live again and rise with his dead body; and as he foresees things that are not as though they were, All live to him. If the dead were not to rise, we should not so easily part with our christian friends, but should sorrow as men without hope, since we should never meet again; but now since Christ is risen, and become the first-fruits of them that slept," we know we also shall rise again and come with him at his appearing. It is no harm that we rest our bodies in the grave, for sin has so spoiled and weakened our mortal frame that it cannot bear up or support under many years fatigue and labour, but must rest. It would be no blessing to live after sickness and pains hath worn us out, and old age
made

made us incapable of being of any more service in our generation; therefore has our wise and good Lord laid in the grave himself, and sanctified the state of the dead that we might go through the dark valley cheerfully, and lie down rejoicing knowing we shall only sleep, and at Jesus's call shall again lift up our heads and rise to life eternal. But this can be so only to such as have experienced the first resurrection, or have risen again with Christ Jesus to a new life. Our Saviour is himself the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in him, though he were dead in Adam and in trespasses and sins, shall live forever; and whosoever has that new life and continues to believe, he shall never die; he shall not feel those inward horrors and pangs and gnawings of conscience, nor the wrath of God, nor fury of the devil, nor dread eternal burnings; he shall not taste of the second death; his departure shall only be to him like the sweet sleep of the wayfaring man and traveller, who, having reached, tired and wearied, his own house, rests and sleeps in peace: so shall one who partakes of Jesus's quickening Spirit be blessed and holy, the second death shall have no power over him.

When the Saviour's marriage day comes, and the trumpets are sounding at midnight, "Go ye out to meet him! Behold the Bridegroom cometh! He comes! He comes on clouds!" They shall rise first. Our Saviour's sweet voice, which causeth those that are asleep to speak, will tenderly awake them. "I will raise them up, he saith, at the last day." He will say to their eternal joy, "Rise up, my love, my dove, and come away!" Then shall they open their eyes and see Jesus face to face; their mortality shall be changed into immortality, and their corruption into incorruption: they shall have
slept

slept their sleep out and fully rested, shall rise and follow him whom their souls loved: the bride shall go with the Bridegroom into the wedding; that is, they shall be taken up with him and appear in the air with him; then shall their despised and reproached company have honour in the sight of all mankind; then shall those that have used them ill see them at Christ's right-hand; they shall hear him confess them and call them the blessed children of his Father. All that have hated them shall reflect in that day and say, "These are they whom we had in derision and as a by-word and proverb of reproach; we fools counted their lives madness and their end to be without honour, but now they are numbered with the saints and have their portion with the children of God; then must they worship at their feet, and know that Jesus has loved them. Thus shall it be with all in the resurrection who have a part in Christ, and whose voice awakened them to believe in him unto life eternal.

But far otherwise will it be with the kindreds of the earth, with all who belong to the world and have lived and died strangers to our Saviour, they also shall rise, and they also "who have pierced him shall see him, and wail because of him." It must be a heavy time to such, a day of gloominess and darkness, a day wherein the mighty man shall weep bitterly, and all faces look pale. These, though they rise again, are dead; and in as much as they did not like our Saviour, they shall feel what it is to be without him; and as they loved not his living and dying, they shall live to die forever, and the resurrection shall be no blessing to them at all. How can the dead live, or their dust mouldered away and driven far off by winds, devoured by beasts, wasted in the seas, be again brought together?

ther? must not be the question of a believer; for to him that faith and it is done all things are possible, and to form all things at first out of nothing, or to call men dead some thousands of years to life, are equally easy to the Creator. This also is a manifest proof of the godhead and divine supremacy and almighty power of Christ, that by him all shall be made alive; he shall make death and hell deliver up their dead, and the graves and the seas give back all that are therein, when he shall begin his new creation of the earth, and make us his first-fruits, his harvest, which were sown in weakness, but shall be raised in power; and when this vile body shall be rendered an innocent, righteous and a glorious body like his own, and thus "will he do according to the mighty working, whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself." But in this place it will be proper to treat of another principle of Christianity; and that is

Of eternal judgment, which is the last mentioned by the apostle, and of which I will speak a few words and conclude this discourse. There is no doubt but that the same almighty and long-suffering God, who is now our Saviour, will one day judge righteous judgment, and set all the many difficult and intricate matters in a clear light. All the hidden things of darkness shall be brought to light, and he will manifest the counsels of every heart. All the oppressors and the oppressed shall then appear before him, and whatever has been done wrong shall be set to rights. He shall deal justly, and decide between him that served God, and him that served him not. Hence is this day called the day of decision, the day of judgment, because then every secret thing shall come into judgment, and what has been done in the closet proclaimed

proclaimed upon the house-top. Two things must then be done, the clearing and justifying the souls who believe in Jesus, and the condemning or rather chastening such as have despised the blood of his covenant, and would not come to him that they might have life. The first our Saviour will do before men and angels. Let satan appear then to accuse the brethren, and seek for their iniquity that he may lay it to their charge, and it shall be hid; our Saviour's wounds have covered it; his grave has buried it; the nails and instruments that tore his flesh, have torn it all to nothing; it shall not be found. Jesus shall then make it appear as the light, and his just dealing as the noon-day, that "he saved them with righteousness, and all his coverts with equity." He will then shew how he paid their debts, endured their chastisement, and drank up their cup, bore their sorrows and curse, and suffered the full due and reward of their sins; that he healed their breach and made them righteous; and should the law and all that was against them appear and accuse or make it plain so much owest thou unto my lord, the wounds in Christ's hands shall answer for us: the iron pen that nailed him to the cross filed all our bills and bonds there, and the receipt wherein God has wrote, "I am well pleased," shall be easy to be read on every bleeding nail-print. Therefore we sing now in confidence of this:

My full receipt shall there be shew'd,
Written with iron pens in blood,
On Jesu's hands and side:
I'm safe, O hell! O death! and sin!
Ye cannot bring me guilty in,
For Jesus for me dy'd!

For

Forever happy those who in that day have been justified by believing in Jesus; they shall then bless the day that ever they were born; they shall bless especially the day in which they heard of the free justification by Christ Jesus: for the Lord the righteous judge, namely, their own dear Lord and Saviour, shall pass the eternal judgment in their favour. No iniquity shall be seen in them for his name sake, in which they have trusted; "they shall be saved with an everlasting salvation;" and for his death sake, in which they have believed, he shall save their souls and bodies for ever alive. As they loved him in the world, so they shall be with him in the worlds to come, and shall see his face, be his bride and wife, his children, his brethren, his favourites, his first-born; and like as in the earth his crucified body was their happiness, and they delighted in looking on him, his reproach and shame and sufferings were dear to them, and they could venture upon him body and soul, and chose him for their Lord God alone, so shall he continue their glory eternally. They shall not be disappointed; they shall follow him whithersoever he goeth, and go no more out of his temple.

It shall not be so with unbelievers, and men who have been fearful, and could not trust the Lamb of God, they shall be ashamed at his coming; and all such as have loved their sins more than the Redeemer, who did despite to the Spirit of grace, and who would not be led by him to the Saviour; but, contrary to all his tender calls and loving convictions, rushed forward, trampling upon the blood of the Son of God and slighting it as if it had been a common thing; such will rue and repent that behaviour; so will they who have rather trusted their own works than his obedience,

who denied his divinity and Godhead, and all who have resisted his mercy and would not come to him, nor sought nor enquired for his salvation; when he comes, these unjust and unholy men shall be unjust and unholy still, an eternal judgment must pass upon them, and they found unworthy to stand before the Son of man. As they would not come under the shelter of his cross and outstretched arms, which were stretched out as the wings of an hen over her young when the storm was coming, they must bear the tempest and perish in their sin; they hearkened to the enemy, and must be his servants: "they loved not blessing, therefore it shall be far from them; they delight in cursing, therefore it shall happen to them; and these shall go away into everlasting punishment." May none here be of that unhappy number.

I have now spoken freely of the first principles of Christianity, such at least as the apostle mentions to the Hebrews; and will only observe, that though these are true doctrines, and of great service to such as are children of God, in that they preserve them who have learned them of the Lord from being tossed about with every wind of doctrine, but they hold fast the form of sound words, and are established; yet to have these principles in the head only, and not to know in the heart what true repentance is, faith in our Lord God Jesus, the baptism of the Holy Ghost, &c. all his knowledge and soundness of judgment, shall rather be a hurt to him than a blessing.

My dear brethren, I wish you heartily to weigh all that has been said, and to enter into your closet and shut the door after you, and there hold an assize in your own breast before the Lord, examine your-

yourselves, if you have turned to him unfeignedly
 and with your whole heart, and repented of your
 past sins and dead works? If you have indeed left
 the world and its lying vanities, and are dead to
 all its pleasures, honours, and enjoyments, and
 with bitterness have sought forgiveness at his
 hands against whom you have sinned wantonly:
 or if you know what it is to see all self-right-
 teousness a mere Babel, and insufficient to make
 a soul happy, or clothe its nakedness before God
 and the angels, and have repented of all your
 pride in that way, so that you blush at the re-
 membering your former high thoughts of your
 goodness and sobriety, and are ashamed in your
 inmost heart at the good opinion you have had of
 yourselves and of your estate in Christianity, and
 of the low and mean thoughts of Jesus and his
 blood and sufferings, and how you have slighted
 his love, and neglected to make sure your calling
 and election, your title and interest to his rest and
 kingdom? Yes, my brethren, enter into judgment
 with your own souls, and let no one less than the
 Holy Ghost be your comforter; but sink as poor
 condemned and guilty criminals before the feet
 of Jesus Christ, and there pour out your prayers
 and tears, there open your afflicted and grieved
 minds and let him refresh you; let his Spirit
 teach you to believe to the saving of your souls;
 let him lay his hands on you and bless you; let
 him sprinkle you from all your idols and cleanse
 you from all your filthiness, and make you new
 and clean hearts, of all which he will be in you
 the faithful and true witness, that so having re-
 pented of dead works, obtained faith in Christ,
 and been baptized into his death, &c. ye may
 cheerfully expect the resurrection and judgment
 to

to come, and therein stand bold as a lion, or as a bride waiting for the bridegroom; till then press forward to know more and more of Jesus and his great sacrifice, which is perfection, and in which ye shall stand complete in the day of his coming with great joy, and be found to his glory forever. Amen.

O thou great Bishop and Apostle of our profession, whose doctrines shall be dearer to me than gold, and more precious than fine gold, instruct me rightly in all things which concern my eternal safety. Let me so hear all thy words and sayings as becomes a believer. Let no human wisdom bias me, or lead aside from crediting implicitly all thy scriptures. Let thy Spirit teach me inwardly the true meaning of all thy doctrines; let him write them upon my heart and mind, and give me to experience thy truth and faithfulness in all thy gracious promises. Grant me true repentance. Make my heart soft and tender and like melted wax, that it may receive every impression of thy love. Let me never be disposed to go back into the world, or conform any more to their manners. O rather transform my heart, and let it be devoted wholly to thee. Make me in love with thee. Give me a living faith in thy death and divinity, and let me live assured of thy favour, and die or rather depart rejoicing in thy salvation. Have a particular care of me, and so bless and endow me with thy Spirit, that I may be led safely and dwell alone and only for thee in the world. Give me also a part in the first resurrection, and let not the judgment to come hurt me. Grant this, my good and dear Master and Minister Jesus, for thy name sake, that my soul may bless thee forever. Amen.

F I N I S.

20 MA 59

The Sufferings and Satisfaction
of Christ.

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BEING THE
SUBSTANCE
OF A
DISCOURSE

DELIVERED IN
The NORTH of IRELAND,
In the YEAR 1752.

By JOHN CENNICK. *K*

Who is this that is glorious in his Apparel, travelling in the
Greatness of his Strength? I that speak in Righteousness,
mighty to save, ISA. lxiii. 1.

Christ loved the Church, and gave himself for it, EPHES.
v. 25.

Christ suffered once for our Sins, the Just for the Unjust, that
he might bring us to God, 1 PET. iii. 18.

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Row. 1791.

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ISAIAH liii. II.

He shall see of the travail of his soul,
and shall be satisfied.

THE prophet, out of whose writings I have chosen this text, is remarkable for his profound knowledge of an insight into the salvation, which he foresaw, as well as other men of God, who, under the law, searched diligently what the Saviour should be, and what manner of salvation and glory should follow the sufferings of Christ. In this respect he was highly favoured, and spoke as if he had been present and cotemporary with our Saviour, and not as one who lived in the days of king Uzziah, and so far off from the days of the Son of man. The title of the evangelical prophet was not bestowed upon him by the fathers for nothing; for a good part of all his prophecy is the pure gospel; and there, as well as in the New-Testament, we find all the blessed doctrine of Jesus Christ. "Isaiah saw his glory, and spake of him."

This whole fifty-third chapter is well known in Christendom, and relates to the humanity, sufferings and glory of the Messiah; and as "he was wounded for our sins, and bruised for our transgressions, and by whose stripes we only can be healed." Let us

now attend to this weighty subject, and learn the riches of his grace and everlasting love to us, from the doctrine of his salvation.

In the text there are three things to be considered :

First, To shew who this person is, of whom all these things are spoken.

Secondly, What is meant by the travail of his soul. And,

Thirdly, What must we understand by his being satisfied.

We frequently meet with expressions of this kind among the prophets ; thus in Daniel we read, " He shall be cut off, he shall finish iniquity." In others, " He shall redeem Israel ; he shall dip his cloaths in the blood of grapes, and wash his garments in wine. He shall live ; and unto him shall be given of the gold of Arabia. Prayer shall be made ever unto him ; and daily shall he be praised. He shall sprinkle many nations ; he shall be a man of sorrows ; and in the text, " He shall see of the travail of his soul." All these, and many more, certainly relate to the same person ; and all the scripture, the law, and the prophets, point to him in every place. This is the glorious He, of whom all have testified and spoken ! The Desire of all nations ! The Hope of Jacob ! The Messiah ! The King of Israel ! He, for whom the twelve tribes waited two thousand years, and who was daily expected in his temple to help and save his people. But who is he ? and what is his name ?

He is the Lord from heaven ; his name is Jesus Christ ; or, as Luther sung,

'Tis Jesus Christ indeed ;
And there's no God beside.

I do

I do not wonder that the Jews had such confused ideas of the Deliverer; for often he was promised as a man, as the seed of the woman, and son of David, and often as the Most High, as the only God and Saviour; and of no other person can all what is said of the Messiah be true; but only of that God and Man Christ Jesus, who was before all things, and made heaven and earth with all their hosts; and shall again roll up the heavens, and create all new; and who once in the form of a servant, lived and died in this sinful world, to reconcile us to himself by his own blood, and save us for evermore.

Let the sage scan, and pry, and weigh, and after all be in suspense about the matter as he will. Let the naturalist scorn as he please; and the Jew and Jewish hearted men blaspheme and mock, it is yet true, Jesus is God. He is the everlasting Lord, the Maker and Saviour of all. This is the foundation and corner-stone of all the prophets, apostles, and martyrs. This is the doctrine of all the scriptures, and of every church of God: and this shall be universally acknowledged when once more the Son of Man shall appear: "Then every eye shall see him, and every knee bow to him, and every tongue shall confess that Jesus is the Lord."

In this matter let us follow the cloud of witnesses, and trust Jesus, and confess and believe him, as he indeed is our Lord and our God. It is a good foundation, and other can no man lay. It is a firm rock, where a soul may build safely, and no storm shall make it fall; "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." It is a tried stone. Now many millions have tried it, and found it true and sure. Who have died in assurance, who did not believe in Jesus? Who have gone joyful and fearless into eternity,

eternity, who had not him for their God? who have denied him, and departed happy? O none in any age! No soul that scorns his blood and divinity; no creature who has not him for his Lord, shall be blessed in time or in eternity. They shall live in darkness and die in darkness, and are without God in the world.

But now let me come to speak of the second part of the text, and treat of the travail of his soul. This is what raises so many doubts in the infidel, and makes him so often argue, If God could travail—if the Lord could die and be a sufferer? And because he cannot believe this, or in his carnal understanding comprehend it, he counts the preaching of the cross foolishness; and chuses rather to trust his own morality, than the obedience and precious death of the Lord that bought him. Foolishness it will seem to every soul till taught of God, and then this doctrine raises in the heart the deepest thanksgivings, and reverence, and adoration, and love to our Saviour, and which increases daily till we shall see him; and then we shall cast our crowns at his feet, and prostrate our selves before his throne, who so loved and valued us, that he once, for our sakes, humbled himself, and was obedient to the death of the cross.

I need not say, that the cause of all the humiliation and sufferings of God's eternal Son, was our fall, and to save us by the sacrifice of himself, for this is every where taught in the bible, and implied in this doctrine of his becoming a man of sorrows especially; and, if our own hearts have the least feeling or life, we know the cause of all the Redeemer's travail.

The

The sinful stirrings of my heart
 With blushes fill my face;
 I feel the cause of Jesu's smart,
 And blest him for his grace.

Before ever our Saviour was incarnate, yea long ere the worlds were made, or the heavens or earth formed, he saw how all things would go with us; and even when in Adam all died, and lost and forfeited his image, and sunk as slaves into the hands of the enemy, his eyes saw it, and his heart had compassion upon us. He knew (humanly speaking) it would have been easier to make a new world and create new souls, than to recover us, now lost and ruined; and in strict justice he might have left us, cursed and spoiled as we were, to feel the vengeance of eternal fire, and begin a new creation for his pleasure; but he loved us too dearly. He valued us far, far too highly to forsake or give us up. No, he knew we were gone from him and in the devil's arms. He understood our captivity, and well saw what it would cost him to get us back, and save us from perishing to eternity; but it did not avail; all he foresaw he should undergo to ransom us, could not prevail with him to resolve to leave us unhelped. "He saw the travail of his soul," understood what bitter pains he must bear to redeem us, but he was satisfied; he loved us with everlasting love, and so became the Saviour. He determined, cost what it would, to have us; and neither did he grudge all he should pay down for us, all he should endure or suffer in body and soul, so his poor dear people could but thereby be saved; and with this view, with this aim, in the fulness of time, he arose from his throne, took leave of all

all his glory, forsook all his majesty and ease, and came down from heaven in the sight of all the angels, and was made lower than they-all for the suffering of death; and thus God the most high God was made a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. It would not be amiss here to speak a little of the nature of the travail of his soul, and consider our Saviour in his sufferings. But O who is fit to undertake this! who can shew forth his sorrows, or worthily tell of his pain! I am ashamed to open my mouth in this matter, because I believe an angel would fall short in describing it; how much more I who am a worm? However, I will say a little, and pray the Lamb to forgive me that I fail so much in shewing forth his travail. I will pass over his mean birth and poor entertainment when he came into the world, as well as the suspicious manner of his conception, and all the miseries of his infancy and tender years; his painful circumcision, and labours, and travails, till his shewing forth unto Israel in the last few years before he made his soul an offering for sin.

In the time of his temptation when for forty days he did eat nothing, but was left to be tried and tempted as we are, that he might be a merciful and compassionate High Priest to us, we may think a little what he went through, hurried and afflicted by satan, affrighted by the wild beasts, and pinched with hunger and want. We may not think his divinity kept him from suffering by any of these, but as deeply as any poor man can be tempted, as much as any soul can be assaulted and amazed, so was he, and assisted only by his Godhead to go through all the hurried trials, hunger, want, and distresses, which possibly could befall a fallen creature.

creature. We need not doubt, but he has felt all what we can feel, and has gone through the fire and water before us. He knows the strength of every temptation, and the great weakness of flesh; and as he was the seed of the woman alone, so he had not the strength of a man, but was weak and like a woman in her pangs, and poorer and meaner than any one. In those days I do not doubt, but had we been present, we might have seen him wander dejected and discouraged up and down the wilderness, now sitting under some lonely shade weeping bitterly, and sighing with his heart ready to break; and now with very distress wringing his pale hands, or lying upon his face sweating with agony, and crying to his Father. As St. Paul's fasting three days was not voluntary, but occasioned through the pain and uneasiness of his heart, he could have no mind to eat when he did not know what would become of him forever; and in this deplorable condition David also forgot to eat bread; so I believe our Saviour's fast was out of real trouble and distress. Had he but spoke the word, the angels, who afterwards ministered to him, would, doubtless, have brought him somewhat to refresh him; but so great was his concern, so dreadful his temptations, so bitter his affliction, and the travail of his soul, that he could not eat or drink until the hours of darkness passed over, and the tempter left him.

Besides the merits of Jesus Christ's fasting and temptations, we may learn two comfortable lessons from them; first, when we are tempted, we may apply to him with living hope, since he knows what it is to be distressed; and is able to save to the uttermost; and, secondly, let his answers to satan be our answers to all sorts of tempters, when they

would turn us from the faith, or make us doubt of the truth, or want reasons of us for what we believe; then let us say, "It is written." If the scriptures have no weight with them, we may not hope to overcome with other weapons, or use other arms. Let us keep his word; this kept him; and by this he overcame.

But now forget where you are, and come in faith to Jerusalem, and see Jesus at supper with his disciples. There properly his miseries seized him, and his soul travailed and was in pain. Methinks I see his countenance change, and the tears flow down his cheeks. He ordained the supper for a commemoration of his death, and said, "This is my body which is given for you, and this is my blood which is shed for you and for many, for the remission of sins;" and when he had distributed the bread and cup to all, he said, "Now is the hour come, I shall now be given into the hands of sinners, the hour of the power of darkness now draws on, and he began to be very sorrowful and to be sore amazed." He went out the same dolorous way by the brook Cedron, where David once had gone weeping before; when Shimei followed cursing and pelting of him; yes, Jesus went the same track, weeping and trembling, into the garden of Gethsemane; and then, like one in the greatest fright, begged his disciples to stay and watch with him, but all in vain; they were heavy with grief to see him so troubled, and slept as midnight approached; while he cried, "Father, save me from this hour: Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me." And thus he prayed three times; and at last he could kneel no more. All God's waterspouts passed over his head, and his terrors set themselves in array before him. All our sins, all uncleannesses,

cleannesses, lies, oaths, drunkenness, pride, covetousness, and ten thousand crimes, appeared before him: our curse, death and hell, stared him in the face, and the wrath of God Almighty burned like a fire, the tempest lowered and thundered over his head; so that he fell flat upon his face, and prayed with strong cries and tears, until the sweat with horror, like blood, gushed out, and made all his cloaths red, as if he had been treading grapes in a wine-fat. O come and see God, who made us, weltering in his blood on the cold ground! See his faint hands spread out, and his mouth in the dust, begging for mercy for his poor people! See his hair now indeed filled with the dew of the night, his heart aching and beating in his breast, and all his limbs trembling and shaking with terror and amaze! Behold him, ye poor sinners! So he removes the curses of the man, who should eat bread in the sweat of his brow; so he takes away the curse of the woman, who should suffer in her travail. He lays his hands upon his loins, like a woman in labour, and with tears, and sweat, and blood, washes out the curse of the ground, and bears the curse of the brute part of the creation, by laying on his belly, and bearing the punishment of all. "O come, let us worship and fall down and kneel before the Lord our Maker!" This is he, for whose pleasure we were made, who now in his agony prays and intercedes for us! How great was our curse, that could make the Holy One of God so tremble and quake at the sight of it; and even force him to beg, "If it be possible, let the cup pass away!" How great our sin, which could not be washed away but by the blood of God Almighty! He prayed, "if it be possible, let this cup pass," to teach us how much it was to be feared; but he knew the decisive hour

and moment was come, either he must drink the wrath, or it must fall upon the sinners; there was no way to escape; and rather than we should have the sword awake upon us, or the cup of God's indignation be poured out upon our heads, he said, "Lo! I come to do thy will: not my will, but thine be done." And therefore is this day called in Isaiah, "the day of vengeance, the year of redemption."

Until now he had none to comfort him: his friends slept, as we have done, and were like Job's friends, miserable comforters indeed! But now an angel has leave to refresh and strengthen him: Alas! how can that be? Or, with what could the happy spirit revive the overloaded Lamb? He could not comfort him, by telling him he should soon be again in heaven: for, amidst all his anguish, if he had pleased to have called for twelve legions of angels to his assistance, they would have appeared, and sung him back to the throne he had before the world began: But it would not have been a comfort to our Saviour, to have sat on the throne, and seen us plunged into hell; or crying out, and gnashing our teeth, under the wrath of God: nor could the angel strengthen our Saviour by telling him of the short duration of his pain, or what glory and ease he should shortly enter, no: Such things can comfort us, but he needeth other comfort: he, for the joy set before him, endured. No doubt the angel raised his wet hands, and kissed his bloody and fainting Master, and said, O my dear Creator! how many unhappy and perishing souls shall this sweat of thine save for ever! How many millions of lost men shall, by this distress of thine, overcome, when they are tempted! How great the number that shall be born to thee by this travail of thy soul! How will they love and thank thee for ever! How shall thy heart
rejoice,

rejoice, when by this means thou shalt have prevailed, and brought home to thee all the nations of the earth ! This could comfort the Redeemer : he could see of the travail of his soul, and be comforted. Just as a woman in her pangs can be comforted when her friends tell her, Be of good cheer, a man child is born to thee : so could our Saviour, our Creator, be comforted, by seeing of the travail of his soul.

And now he rose from the earth, and came to his disciples with his garments rolled in blood ; and now Judas, and a great multitude with him, enter the garden with torches, staves, and lanthorns, to take him. His disciples awaked, and saw the two dreadful sights : Jesus in that affecting form, and the mob coming, possessed with fury and rage, to take him ; while he prayed for them, and told them, " This night shall the Son of man be betrayed." And then he bears the falshood of Judas, and lets a traitor, a wicked man, a devil kiss him ; while the others load him with bonds and chains, and drag him into the city. One should have thought his bloody and faint looks would have melted them ; but all had no effect upon them. I suppose they filled the roads and streets with rejoicings and buzzas, that now they had got him fast in misery and irons. His care, amidst all, was only about his disciples ; and therefore he said, " If you seek me, let these go their way." He knew what he meant, and satan knew also : for, unless the enemy had consented upon that condition to give up his claim and right eternally to the souls, he could not have seized upon Jesus. This being settled, then he gave himself for us into their hands, and was brought from prison to judgment ; and before Annas and Caiphas arraigned and accused of blasphemy and sacrilege, which he meekly bore
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the charges, since we had been guilty, and was content to be black with our hurt, and reckoned with transgressors, that by bearing our sins we might go free. All the day after his being apprehended, he was made a gazing-stock for angels and men: he was brought before Pontius Pilate the governor of Judea, and then before Herod of Galilee, where all the priests and many people accused him vehemently: some spit in his face, others struck him on the mouth: some blind-folded him, and then again beat him, asking him blasphemously, "Tell us, if thou be a prophet, who smote thee?" Thus his prophetic office was derided; but he answered not. Then Herod gave him to his soldiers, who called together the whole band, to make sport with him: some dressed him in purple; and others, mean while, got thorns and plaited them so that every thorn might pierce his head and face, and with this they crowned him; and another, for a sceptre, put a reed or cane in his hand; and then they saluted him, and bowed to him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" Thus they mocked his kingly office; but Jesus opened not his mouth. What a sight was the Son of God! How glorious did the King of Israel look! All his sacred face covered with shame and spittle; his eyes swollen and red with weeping as with wine, and bruised with being blind-folded and pushed from one to another: the blood trickling from the thorn-prints with tears streaming down his face, his beard torn off; for "he gave his cheeks to them that plucked off the hair;" and so they appeared, as Solomon describes it, "like rows of jewels." His hands that had been so often reached out to bless his children, and to heal the sick, now are bound; and when they had scourged him until one could have counted the bones; or, as David says, "they plowed his

his

his back ;” then they brought him out upon the steps of the pavement, wearing the crown of thorns and purple robe, crying, “ Behold the Man !” And one of the evangelists says, a person met him and struck him on the head with a cane. One of the fathers also, who wrote in the primitive church, said, the soldiers lifted up the robe which was thrown over his torn back, and, by Pilate’s order, shewed him to the people ; intending thereby to stir up pity in them toward him, that, if possible, he might be released : but though the sight could have moved a stone almost, and melted the hardest heart, it had no effect, unless to make them more violent and eager to see him dead.

But let us behold the Man : on his head he carries the curse of the ground, thorns and thistles ; and on his back he has carried our burdens and sorrows : these stripes, those many wounds, are for “ the healing of the nations ;” and he stands there exposed and shewed forth, that we may “ look to him and be saved.” Now is he “ the fairest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely !” Now is he glorious in his apparel !” But all his scourging, his standing like a criminal at the bar of a man ; his blows, bruises, threats, scoffs, shame, pain, or barbarous usage, do not make him once complain or repine. We do not hear that he so much as said, O it is too much ! But he so loved us, that he bore contentedly all for us ; and our ease and peace was more to him than his own. He knew we had deserved all that and more ; and therefore, to the astonishment of the princes and priests, and to the surprise of men and angels, he held his peace. After he had suffered all indignity, and pain, and reviling, they stripped off from him the purple garment, and, no doubt, set his wounds afresh to bleeding ; and
now

now they put his own cloaths on him, and led him out to crucify him. They had preferred a murderer before him, and all together desired Pilate to crucify him. And now "behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!" Satan plagued his righteous spirit; men had punished, and struck him, and shamed him before Jews and Heathens; and God had now laid upon him the iniquities of us all. Thus, on the solemn feast-day of expiation, it was the custom of the Jews to lead, or rather drag out by the horns, the scape-goat, and bring him into the wilderness, that he might in a shadow carry away the sins of the people into a land uninhabited: so they laid the cross upon Jesus, and dragged him out of the gates of the city, loaded with all our crimes, and the sin of the whole world. What pain must he have borne in his body, when upon his raw and wounded back and shoulders, he was obliged to carry a cross large enough to hang him on: and we may well think how that pressed into his sore flesh, and made it exceeding painful: besides, the crowds of people, who pressed about him, must have often shook the cross, and made him ready to swoon away; and lest this should be the case, or that he should die before they had got their malice fully satisfied upon him, they offered him wine and myrrh, but he would not drink; and now methinks I see him crawl up mount Calvary. This was the place of the execution of criminals, and where many guilty robbers and murderers had launched into eternity. It was the gate of death and hell; and here Jesus intended to open the gate of heaven. The death of the cross was esteemed cursed above all other deaths in the eyes of the Jews; and they no more supposed a hanged one could be saved, any more than a dog; and herein they

they shewed their deep spleen, in thrusting him, if possible, not only out of the world, but into hell. Whence this sort of death was reckoned accursed, or called so of God, I know not, unless because our ruin and sin began its reign upon a tree; but now Jesus ends the curse in himself, and willingly is nailed upon the wood, that he may be a curse for us, and become a Saviour even of such as perish in that way.

He was stripped naked, and his cloaths given among the soldiers; and now methinks I see them lay the cross on the ground, and throw him down backward upon it. No lamb ever laid so meekly upon the altar as this Lamb of God, when he offered himself for us: see he stretches out his dear hands to receive the nails; and now hark while the executioner drives in the fatal iron! Those hands, that had been lain upon so many children and others to bless them, now stream with blood: this done, then in like manner his sacred feet, which wanted rest and were weary with journies and travelling, instead of rest must have torture and pain, and be fastened with nails; and thus satan fulfils the scripture, and "bruises his heel." O come, in spirit, and see the Lamb! See how he weeps and bleeds, but opens not his mouth! Well may that which was said of Joseph in the Psalms be applied to him, "the iron entered into his soul;" but this was the way he wrote our names in the book of life. O my soul, canst thou ever think he forgets thee? A woman may forget her sucking child, and slight the fruit of her body which she bare with so much pain, but he can never forget thee: he has graven thee upon the palms of his hands. He will never forget to eternity what he felt when his hands were driven through with nails on the cross, and when his

pangs and labour brought thee to the new-birth. When Solomon describes him in his Song, he says, "his hands had rings of Beryl;" so it appeared when round the heads of the nails the precious blood gushed out, and made open the wells of salvation.

But now comes on the heaviest time of suffering; they raise the cross upright, and shewed him naked and wounded to all! O what shouts of joy were heard from all the thousands of Israel, when they saw him lifted up! Jews and Gentiles mock together, and shake their heads, and clap their hands, and hiss at him, while his white and ruddy body was raised up, like an ensign upon a hill. What must he have felt when he hung thus? What a rack was his whole body and soul in? For now that storm, which had been so long gathering, burst upon him from on high: now the sword of the Lord awakened on the man that was his fellow; and he who had kept silence with pain and grief hitherto, now roared for the disquietness of his heart. Men vented all their malice and fury upon him; nothing but enemies seem to surround him; he heard their blasphemy on every side with an aching heart. Satan, and all his unhappy multitude, shewed all their rage could prompt them to do, and scorned him now with all their power; and now his dear eternal Father, and the whole blessed Godhead, seemed to leave him, that he might bear the fierceness of God's anger, and tread the wine-press of his wrath alone. It is true, no human creature can ever guess what he felt when he uttered that horrid cry, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani!" It made heaven and earth and hell shake, and struck all with an eternal surprise and wonder: if ever that was literally true, it might well be now, "that in heaven there was silence about

about the space of half an hour :” namely, while the battle seemed doubtful, when hell and all her powers heaped on him curse upon curse, and terror on terror ; and the weight of all our sins and crimes, secret and known, bowed down his soul ; and the Lord spared not his only Son, but smote him without mercy, for the sheep that were scattered. Satan wished nothing more, than that he should soon be tired out with misery, and call for his angels and retire, and leave the world unredeemed ; nor once thought he so loved them, that he would wade through hell and death, to pluck them as brands out of the burning : but Jesus loved us even unto death, and weathered out the dreadful storm ; nor once begged for pity or mercy, until in his last agony, when he had fully drank up the dregs of the cup of trembling and astonishment, and made a perfect and complete atonement and amends for our sin, and endured all our wrath, paid down our full price and ransom ; and then he was justified in spirit, namely, when God the Holy Ghost bare witness in his heart the world was now his own, and all things recovered by the blood of his cross, and the sin and iniquity ended, and the transgression finished, and the everlasting righteousness brought in,” and then came the hour of the joy and gladness of his heart : with his arms stretched out, like Sampson, he took hold on the sin with one hand, and the wrath of God with the other, the two pillars on which all stood, and then with his last cry he said aloud, “ It is finished !” and bowed down his head and gave up the ghost ; and, in his fall, he threw down all that was against us, all our blame, condemnation and curses, and left it all nailed with his body to the tree. But then the heavenly hosts, who, no doubt, had looked on amazed and wondering hitherto, broke out in the new song, ‘ Now is come

salvation ! he has obtained eternal redemption ! he has cast the accuser of the brethren down ! he has bruised the serpent's head ! " Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive blessing, and honour, and thanksgiving for ever and ever ! "

But let us go back a little, and observe how he poured out his soul. How three hours he waded, as it were, through the depths of hell, and fought his sheep out of the bitterness of death. In this condition Jeremiah spoke of him when he said, " Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by ? Behold and see ! if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, where-with the Lord has afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger ! " It was then " out of the belly of hell he called unto God his Father ; " when " the waves and storms went over his soul, and when the deep waters went nigh to swallow him up. " But amidst it all he had pity on his poor mother, and him whom he loved, and spake comfortable to them : nor did all the blasphemous upbraidings of the multitude, nor their barbarous and hard-hearted behaviour make him angry, or provoke him to call fire from heaven to destroy them, or cause hell or tophet to swallow them up, but he prayed for them, " My Father, forgive them ; they know not what they do. " He knew satan had blinded them ; he considered whereof they were made, and remembered they were but dust ; and knew well, when hereafter he should save them, and wash them, and shed abroad his love in their hearts, how much they would love him and thank him for his grace ; and indeed he knew for such, and for no better, he was enduring his cross. He could promise himself nothing more, for all " the travail of his soul, " than that these should be his inheritance, and by his death be saved from death eternal ; and this was the

the aim of the Deliverer: this was the joy set before him, and the mark of his prize. This was never more exemplified in his pardoning the dying thief; for he was crucified between two such: "He was numbered with transgressors, and made his death with the wicked," who joined to mock and revile him, until he had made intercession for the transgressors, "My Father, forgive them;" and then one relents and prays him, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom!" and immediately Jesus answers mercifully, "To-night shalt thou be with me in paradise." Who can help seeing here a miracle of mercy, a monument of free grace? And why did he do this loving act so publicly? Why absolve the dying criminal so openly? but that he might let heaven and earth see "he is Lord of the living and dead, and can give eternal life to whom he will;" that all mercy is his, and "he can do what he will with his own." Let none be offended with this wonder of grace, but love him the more; and let the worst hereby hope, thro' this man's mercy, to obtain mercy. No doubt he now sings upon the mount Sion with the greatest reverence, and remembers how he was saved from the very brink and edge of the bottomless pit. He now, who had so much forgiven him, loves his Saviour so much the more; and he became the first-fruit of the death of Jesus, some of the first part of his reward, wherewith he is satisfied for all his labour and travail. But another thing was remarkable in our Saviour at his death, and that was his thirst. We are sure it was not his natural thirst, of which he spake; for, when they offered him water or vinegar mingled, and put it in a sponge to his lips, he would not drink: he had said before, "I will not drink any more of the fruit of the vine, until I drink it

it new in the kingdom of my Father!" No, he thirsted once to see the people saved; he longed to have the moment come, "when the kingdom of this world should become his, even the Lord's and his Christ's." And therefore, as the happy time drew nigh that all was finished, he bowed down his head, as if he would take a look once more upon his dear-bought world; or, as if he would say, Now all is over, ye are mine: come near, and let me kiss you. And though he died in labour, though he was wearied out with torture, and his tongue parched with crying, his heart failing, and "his bowels dried up like a potsherd, his eyes weary with looking upward, his feet with anguish red, like brass burning in the furnace," and his soul just fleeting; yet his last cry was loud, that it might be heard through all worlds, and go deep into our ears and hearts, that the redemption and salvation, and all we could want in time and in eternity, was then and there entirely obtained and accomplished; and then his travailing soul departed and rejoiced all the spirits in Paradise, and in all the heavens, who had waited from the death of Abel for the day of redemption.

He was scarce dead, but a soldier was resolved to know whether he was a man or no, and thrust his spear into his side, and this at once became the sign of the Son of man, and opened the fountain for sin and uncleanness to all the once lost, now ransomed world. All before had been dark for three hours, and the prince of darkness seemed to have taken possession of the whole earth; and besides, it made the time of the Lord's sufferings more gloomy and melancholy, and during the whole a horrible dread overwhelmed him; but now all cleared up and went on in former order. From this day the King began his reign, which shall have no end; and from hence
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he draws all men after him. Who do not sit under this Shadow, have no great delight; and who do not know the refuge of this dry Tree, or rather this flourishing Apple-tree, he is yet a stranger to true rest and safety. This is the Hiding-place in the storm. This is the Ensign to which all the nations must flow. This is the only happy sight for a poor sinner. Whoever comes to him crucified, or looks to him, shall not perish; he shall have everlasting life. But I must leave a little the travail of our Redeemer's soul, to speak upon the third part of the text, "he shall be satisfied."

It is said of Jacob, that though "the sun burned him by day, and the frosts consumed him by night;" and though he was twenty years a servant, or rather a slave to Laban; yet for the love he had to Rachel, who was the chief part of his wages, he counted it but a little while, and thought little of all his servitude, i. e. he was satisfied. In this sense Jesus was satisfied. Before ever he became a servant, and began his sorrowing and hard life in the world, he knew what should be the wages of his service. The Father had shewn him before-hand "of the travail of his soul, and he was satisfied." God, even his own God, had, as it were, said to him, My Son, thou seest how satan has prevailed over all flesh, and has spoiled thy handy-work; if thou, out of true love, wilt go down and redeem them, "I will make them a willing people, I will draw them to thee. Thou shalt have children born to thee, like the dew of the womb of the morning; as numerous as the drops of rain that water the earth, so shall thy seed be:" yea, if thou wilt bear their sin and curse, and die in their stead, be numbered with transgressors, and taste death for every man, and pour out your soul to death in their behalf,
then

then "will I divide thee a portion with the strong," I will give thee a great company, which no man can number; "the heathen shall be thine inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth thy possession." A family will I elect and preserve to thee out of all the families of the earth, who shall be saved by thee, and be thy praise to all generations; and besides this, thou shalt quicken whom thou wilt. All shall be thine, the living and the dead; none shall find mercy but at thy hands; nor shall any soul, ready to perish, ask mercy in thy name, whom I will send empty away: every miserable and undone creature that believes and trusts in thy death, or flies to thy blood, I will save, and thou shalt be the Saviour of the world to all eternity; yea, ask any thing, and I will do it; and Jesus was well-pleased, "he was satisfied." He took a view of all the melancholy and dolorous hours he should see; he weighed well what a price he must pay down for our ransom; what bitter and affrighted sufferings he must endure; how he mocked and rejected of his own wicked creatures; and how feel an eclipse of his blessed and eternal divinity; but for the love of his poor people, out of pity and compassion to their estate, and rather than they should be left ruined for ever, he was satisfied to be their Saviour, and willingly and chearfully entered the war, put on flesh, and endured as a righteous servant. "The sun burned him by day, and the frost consumed him by night." In body and soul, "he was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief," and endured the days of his servitude faithfully, and counted all but a little for the wages he should have for his travail; namely, for the souls who should be his reward, world without end. For these he did not grudge what he went through; but
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to get these, he despised the shame, and laid down his life willingly; and even now one may venture to affirm, if there was a soul upon earth that could not possibly be saved, unless he would die again, he would rather a second time leave all his joy and glory, and act the tragic scene afresh over again. But we assist herein, in some measure, to satisfy our Saviour. He is not satisfied, while we are miserable. He is not well pleased, while we are without the happy enjoyment of his righteousness and pardon in our hearts, while we are slaves of his enemy, and slight his redemption; or, as St. Paul terms it, "trample under foot his blood," he must be grieved; but that fulfils his joy, and makes his heart satisfied, when we flow to him. When we will not and cannot be happy without him: when a soul, once unhappy and restless, a vassal, a bond-servant of sin and the devil, has obtained salvation in him, and is delivered from the iron yoke, and sits down blessed and joyful at Jesu's feet, thanking him with unspeakable joy for his cross and sufferings; then can he be said properly to be satisfied, and can say to his angels, "Rejoice with me, for I have found that which I had lost." How far it will go before the Lord's heart shall be fully satisfied, he only knows; but he will certainly draw yet many millions to him, till his thirst is quite allayed, and his longing after souls is satisfied. Let us ask our hearts in his presence this question: Is he satisfied with me? For all the travail of his soul, has he yet won me, and got me to be his happy reward and wages? Or has not all his labour and pains, and all the continual striving of the Holy Ghost to win me to him, been yet as it were in vain?

O my dear friends, my brethren, for whom Christ travailed and laboured, give him willingly your
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hearts. Let him be your Shepherd, and be you his willing sheep. Let him lead you to his fold, and rejoice his heart over you, and no more for joy remember the grief he endured when he won you to himself, and paid your price. Do you want to be his? then plead the sufferings wherewith he merited you. Put him in mind of the travail of his soul, and urge before him his availing pangs and sorrows. Be in earnest with him, and cease not your importuning till he has laid his bleeding hands upon you and blessed you. Abide his poor needy and dependant suppliants at the foot of his cross, till his Spirit, which made his last moments joyful and gladsome, assures you he has sealed you among his jewels, and is satisfied with you and in you. Be you also satisfied in him, and be his joy and he yours in all eternity. Amen,

O Thou blessed Lamb of God, who on my account hast humbled thyself, and been here in the world in the form of a servant, and hast laboured day and night, and at last poured out thy soul to death for me, take me into thy flock, and number me with thy people, the folk who shall be the reward of thy sufferings for ever; look upon me, and remember I am a soul for whom thou hast been slain, and for whom all thy sorrows have been borne. O let thy heart be satisfied with me, and rejoice over me as a bridegroom over the bride. Let thy bitter torments and horrors be weighty to me, and teach me rightly to esteem and value thy sufferings and death. Let me find all my happiness in thy wounds and blood as long as I live, and be sure I am thy beloved and redeemed child, and when I come to depart this life, let thy dying pains and agonies sweeten my last moments to me and comfort me:
be

be the God of my life; and let my death be precious in thy sight. Let nothing hinder me to be thine here and for ever. As long as I am a pilgrim and stranger in the world, abide near to me, and let me live to thy praise; and when I must go hence, O go with me, lead me into the strong city, into the New Jerusalem, and present me for thyself before all the angels as one of thy elect souls, who has made his garments white in thy blood, and by means of thy meritorious travail and anguish, is arrived safe, out of much tribulation, to the kingdom of God. Hear me in this one thing, and make me thy sure possession, thy inheritance, and a part of thy wages; and be satisfied with me, and make me satisfied with thee for evermore. Amen.

An H Y M N.

I.

O Dearest Saviour, whose I am,
And whom I serve alone,
At thy pierc'd feet I blush for shame,
And sit, like Mary, down.

II.

I raise my eyes and see what smart,
What grief I put thee to:
And yet ('tis strange) it heals my heart,
While I thy anguish view.

III.

I know my sins prepar'd the wood,
The nails, and whips, and spear,
Which tare and slew my Lord and God,
And drew forth every tear.

IV. I

IV.

I know that ev'ry stripe he had,
And ev'ry pang he bore,
And ev'ry grief, 'till he was dead,
Was my desert, and more.

V.

This makes me at his cross design
To fit, and see, and prize
That loving Lamb, that God of mine,
That wond'rous Sacrifice!

20 MA 59

F I N I S.

The Beatitudes.

4455.28
4

BEING THE
SUBSTANCE
OF A
DISCOURSE

DELIVERED IN
D U B L I N,

In the YEAR 1753.

By JOHN CENNICK. *K*

A faithful man shall abound with blessings. Prov.
xxviii. 20.

All these blessings shall come upon thee. Deut.
xxviii. 2.

THE FIFTH EDITION.

L O N D O N:

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MARK V. 3, &c.

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is
the kingdom of heaven.

HIS is the beginning of our Saviour's
T sermon upon the mount, and is the
more remarkable, because as the Old
Testament or the last of the prophets
ends with a threatening and curse, so our Saviour
begins his New-Testament with a blessing, and
opens his mouth in the gospel-dispensation with
gracious promises. In this discourse he has taught
his disciples many weighty lessons; the whole has
been justly praised by all his people, and is a
transcript of his mind, and the best ecclesiastical
rule, ritual and rubric of his universal church.

He delivered this discourse upon a mountain
(for great multitudes followed him), that so all
might see and hear him. The Scribes and Pha-
risees without doubt despised him for this manner
of preaching, and especially those who were so
fond of the temple that they had hated the Sama-
ritans and such as worshipped out of it: but hence
we learn, that to our Saviour all places are alike
and may be used for the publishing his gospel;
and though houses set apart for his worship and
the divine service are good and convenient, yet
we must not forget that he dwells not in temples

made with hands; but where two or three are met in his name, he is present in the midst. The true temple shall be open and manifest in another world, and this is God and the Lamb himself. We should not place any great matter in the form of setting forth the word of God, since Jesus frequently sat and taught the people. He meant by it the greatest familiarity, and spoke with creatures as a father to his dear children. His being willing to be seen and heard by all, should teach us he is not willing any should be hindered to look upon him and be saved; nor is it of him when he is not heard to eternal life. The god of this world is the sole author and cause of all that blindness, backwardness and unwillingness in men to come to Jesus that they might have life.

The time will not allow me to speak of all the blessed doctrines contained in this sermon of our Lord's at this time. I will therefore only speak of those beatitudes or blessings pronounced in the former part of it, and this I purpose to do in a simple and free manner.

“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” It must not be left unobserved that the poor in spirit, or the spiritually poor people, have the first right to all the blessings of God. This is to me very important.

When St. Luke relates the particulars of this divine discourse he mentions only the poor; but St. Matthew is more clear; for though our Saviour's disciples were poor men, and but few noble or rich called to his church, yet therefore, because the poor or common people heard him gladly and followed him, are they not blessed, but the poor in spirit, the souls who are poor and worthless

worthless in their own eyes, these are they our Saviour blesses. It might not be amiss to observe, that poor and mean people in the world have succeeded better with our Saviour than the rich or wealthy; but perhaps the God of equity has so ordered it, that some who desire it have been vessels of honour in the world and had their good things here, while others have had their evil things and been vessels of dishonour, but have found the Pearl of great price, and in their low estate, like the virgin Mary, have found the Lord and that treasure laid up in heaven. Though, as I said before, the outward or bodily poverty have not always had this effect, or been the reason of their being chosen into the kingdom of heaven; but where the wants and afflictions, the poverty and penury of this life have put the soul upon seeking true riches, there it must be confessed it was good for them that they have been afflicted. Riches, on the other hand, have proved a hurt and a snare, and hindered many to be saved. Our Saviour says, How hardly shall they that have riches enter the kingdom of God? They have much to leave; they find it difficult to submit to the foolishness of the preaching of faith; a sense of honour keeps them ashamed of Jesus and his people; their education teaches them to despise the unpolished simplicity and artless behaviour of the children of God; they know how to reason; they are high, and all their little religious acts are so magnified, that it often seems to them as if they supported the cause of the Lord, and their power defended it, or as if Jesus was beholden to them; and when they put on the form of godliness, they are too apt to lord it over the meaner sort and people of an inferior rank;

rank; thus they cheat themselves and miss true happiness: or, are they profane? then their riches helps them on in their mad course, and paves their way and makes it smooth to hell. They take great liberties, they jest and ridicule the scriptures, they mock the faith, dispute atheistically, serve their lusts, pleasures, and the god of this world with all greediness, oppress their subjects, and are quite unconcerned about giving any account of their stewardship till they are called away, and then what good will all their riches do them? Who of their companions can save them, or of what advantage will it be for them to recollect how great or wealthy they have been in the world, when they have lost their own souls? Many of these, if they had been poor in the world, perhaps, might have had a part in the kingdom of God; and, on the other hand, I doubt not but that many in heaven might have perished had they been rich or great in the world. The wise Disposer of all things knows what he does; he has chosen his people should have little of the world, but he has prepared for them a kingdom: we should not therefore once repine, because the blessings of this life seem to be so unequally divided, or because some are so loaded with good things, and we have but food and raiment, or even suffer in that respect. He that sitteth in heaven, ruleth all things well. Let us only get an interest in him, and we shall not envy them who have their corn and wine and oil increased; we are far richer than they all, and far happier; for when the earth is burnt up and time is no longer, we have a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and riches which no moth or rust can corrupt or thief break through and steal.

After

After all that has been said, where a man is a faithful steward of that committed to him, and where his heart leaves all that he has and gets hold of Jesus our dear Saviour; his having been rich or noble, will be no hindrance to his salvation; and where a poor man despises our Saviour's grace, and lives careless of his blood and merits, and does not come to him, his poverty will not help him: he may be a beggar, or suffer want, or be very low and poor in the world, and yet have a high, proud and stubborn heart, and be of that unhappy number that God beholds afar off.

True poverty of spirit is, as St. Austin observes, humility; it is a lowliness of heart which proceeds from a divine conviction of our sinful and bad estate by nature. That man is poor who has no money, cloaths, house, or friend, but is in debt greatly; his wife and children are sold to be slaves, and he cast into prison till payment be made. Thus he is poor in spirit who knows he has no good thing dwelling in him, he has no real righteousness, he has a sense of his owing his Lord very much, he has nothing to offer, can promise nothing, can do nothing, feel his guilt, his sinful nature, his enmity, his carelessness, his hardness of heart, and incapacity to help himself. He looks upon himself directly in that state described in the sixteenth chapter of Ezekiel, cast out to the loathing of his person in the open field, neither washed, cloathed, or pitied, but friendless and undone. No one but he that had experienced a deep awakening by means of the Holy Spirit can judge of such people's case. How mean, how little and worthless they are in their own eyes! how self-condemned and abhorred for all they

they do, or think, or say! how sincerely they can tell our Saviour, I am poor and needy! This is indeed the state and condition of all men; but they do not, they will not know and confess it. Hence arise all the deceits of self-righteousness, and all the fancies of being holy, good, or better than others. Hence they frequently suppose themselves rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing, but imagine they have been educated well, done a great deal of good, wronged nobody, kept to church, given alms, and been merciful, charitable to the poor, and made a tolerable proficiency in the knowledge of the scriptures; but such are the Laodiceans, the lukewarm people, whom our Saviour will spue out of his mouth, and whose righteousness is like the morning dew. A poor sinner has not such thoughts; he cannot value himself any more; he looks upon himself on a level with the worst and the vilest of men; and that not perhaps because he has been a murderer, an adulterer, or house-breaker, but on account of his filthy and nasty heart: he finds fault with all that others about him may praise and commend in him; and under such a sense of his fallen and spoiled state, he sits down at Jesu's feet, or begs at his door of mercy: he can plead nothing he has done or merited: he has nothing unspotted or without blemish to lay upon his altar, all that he has is lame and halt and blind, and therefore his only hope, his thirst and daily cry is, Have mercy on me! O dear Saviour, pity me!

No angel's tongue can describe how dear and precious Jesus is in such a soul's eyes; they would part with their lives joyfully to know him as their own; had they ten thousand worlds they would not
hesitate

hesitate a moment about it, but would part with them all to feel his love and be assured of his tender mercy: blessed are such poor in spirit; theirs is the kingdom of heaven. I know thy poverty, says our Saviour to such, but thou art high. It was his first and chiefest design in the redemption to help such poor people; he looks on them as men ready to perish, souls that owed much but had nothing to pay, and therefore he would stand their friend and make satisfaction for them; he became their surety, stood in their place, paid off the frightful score, and obtained and provided the kingdom of heaven for them. O this is amazing grace! but not more wonderful than true and certain. What joy must a christian soul perceive and feel in his heart, who just now sat down weary or fighting for mercy with a heart ready to break at our Saviour's feet, and yet, through a consciousness of sin, could hardly hope to be accepted, when our Saviour whispers within, "Thine is the kingdom of heaven. I have loved thee with everlasting love. I had hid myself a little moment and thou wast troubled;" but now "the winter is past and the storm gone, and the time of singing of birds is come: rise up, my love, my dove, and come away!" O such an one must think with shame, Lord, what am I? and must be abased and bowed down with thankfulness and gratitude forever, and more and more wonder at this grace and great salvation, and cleave to our Saviour, love and value his death and obedience, and be resolved only to exalt and bless him forever.

This blessedness always accompanies a person spiritually poor: they are blessed, and shall be blessed: theirs is the kingdom. No sooner is a soul

stripped of all self-holiness and dead to the law, i. e. without any hope of help thereby, but, quite poor in mind and heart, ventures to the cross or feet of Jesus; but the Holy Spirit comforts him and lets him know the kingdom of heaven is his; he leads him in to possess it, and grants him such a lot of his part therein, strikes him with so deep a sense of our Saviour's free and eternal love to him, and at the same time gives him such a foretaste of this kingdom which is now his, and of which there shall be no end, that the remembrance of this hour, this happy time, shall always be fresh and lively to him forever; and let what will happen afterwards to him, which can either pain or grieve or trouble him or sink his spirits, this shall still comfort him that the kingdom of heaven is his; and as long as he abides under the sense of his own poverty, so long shall the same Lord and Saviour refresh and bless him in this manner, till he enters the gates into the fulness of this kingdom at God's right hand in the glory everlasting.

All the blessings in the Old Testament were promised, by the prophets, to the poor: "He helpeth the poor, when he crieth; the needy, and him that has no helper: he lifted the poor out of the mire: he considereth the poor: I will dwell, saith he, with him that is poor, and trembleth at my word." Expressions of this nature are found in almost every book of the scripture, and all the meaning of these is comprehended in these gracious words of our Saviour, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Blessed are they who are mean and little and worthless in their own eyes, as a bit of dust, as a poor small and contemptible worm, who are
convinced

convinced of their own nothingness and poverty; to such belongs the kingdom of heaven; for such Christ died; out of pity to such he was extreme poor, that they, through his poverty, might become rich; and by his having nothing and being a servant, they might possess all things, and be kings and priests to God, rich in faith, and with that gold tried in the fire, and having got the treasure hid in the field, spoken of by our Saviour, they shall be esteemed rich indeed of God and all the angels in eternity.

“Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.” In that solemn and awful charge given to the destroying angels in the ninth of Ezekiel, wherein they are commanded to slay utterly old and young, nor suffer their eyes to spare or pity, they are forbid to come near those that mourn. It was also mentioned as a chief part of our Saviour’s office in the world, “He shall comfort those that mourn.” Solomon also had said, it was safer to be in the house of mourning than in the house of mirth. But who are these meant in the text? The mourners of Sion; they are people whose eyes God has opened to see their own hearts, poor people who feel their sin and want salvation. Some, when they are a little awakened, comfort themselves with thinking they are not very bad, but better than many others; or let their friends comfort them by persuading them the same, or that they are good christians already and in a safe way; they call all spiritual concern a madness, and take all due care to keep people from the danger; yea, if a most abandoned liver, a notorious drunkard or whoremonger, of whom they had before no manner of care, should come under any apprehensions of danger, or should

grow uneasy about his future state, such would be ready to help him out of this error, and advise him to be of good cheer, to ride out, or go to the play, or get into some merry company, or change the air, or take physick; and often souls are comforted by this means, and they seem to get out of all their fears or uneasiness directly; for they have had comforters, but such as Job's were all such: miserable comforters indeed! These are they of whom the prophet complains so heavily, "They heal the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, crying Peace, peace, when there is no peace." But a soul truly convinced of sin cannot and will not be comforted with such things: "they look on him whom they have pierced, and mourn for him as one mourns for her only son." Nothing less than the Holy Ghost can comfort them. All they want is to know they are forgiven and shall be saved; they want to be assured of their being children of God, and at peace with him through Jesus Christ. These are the mourners spoken of in this place; they feel the want of a Saviour; they cannot be put off with health, riches, company, pleasures, &c. they are too sensible of their guilt and sin, too heavy laden and weary, too sick and disordered and uneasy to be diverted with any thing less than the kisses of the Beloved. As long as he is at a distance they are troubled, till they feel his love shed abroad in their hearts they mourn, and they shall be comforted. Our Saviour will wipe away the tears from their eyes; he will speak peace to their hearts; they cannot do without his presence, and they shall have it for evermore; they will not rest without his consolation, and he will send the Holy Ghost the Comforter to comfort. I will comfort you, saith he,

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as a mother comforts her only son ; I will remove thy fears and jealousies, and assure thee of my affection and loving-kindness ; I will be thy good Saviour ; I will forgive thee, and thy past mispent life I will forget, and enter into an everlasting covenant with thee that thou shalt be my child. Thus it happened with Hezekiah, he mourned like a dove, and was alone and comfortless like a swallow upon the house-top, and turned to the wall, wept and said, Lord, I am oppressed, undertake for me ; and the Lord heard his supplication and saw his tears, he heard his moan and comforted him, assuring him all his sins were cast behind his back. Thus he treated David, Paul, Cornelius, and as many as mourned after him ; and thus he does in our days. The mourning of a soul after salvation is nothing else but being sick of love, and languishing for the Holy Spirit to assure him he is beloved by our Saviour ; and till he is this way comforted he must mourn, he cannot help it ; and if any thing short of the blood and pardon of the Lamb can stop his grief, he is an unhappy person, be he who he will.

There is such a blessedness attainable, such a divine assurance of the love of God to us, and such a certainty of our going to heaven as can refresh and comfort the otherwise inconsolable. All that sincerely seek salvation, and neither want to cheat themselves, or suffer themselves to be cheated by others, shall be comforted with this eternal consolation. Let him only turn to the Man of sorrows, and mourn after him, and he shall be blessed ; the Lord himself shall comfort him ; and the days of his mourning shall have an eternal end ; the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it, they shall be comforted.

“ Blessed

“Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.” A meek person is a tender-hearted person; or, as it is expressed in scripture, a contrite one, a bruised or broken-hearted soul. His conscience is softened by looking upon Jesus, he has learned it of him. He no more behaves impudently or strong; he is no more careless or hardened in his natural state: but it is just so with him as it was with Peter when our Saviour looked upon him; his eyes and heart melted immediately; he cursed and lyed no more, but with bitter tears sought pardon; so he melts before the Lamb of God; a sharp word can pierce through such; every tender conviction fastens upon their heart, and an openness to confess and acknowledge their being to blame is visible in them. They are poor sinners, whose hearts, consciences and eyes are softened by the blood of Jesus. A sight of his death has stamped an everlasting mark upon their foreheads, and made their inmost soul like melted wax. Their tenderness of conscience, scrupulosity, and fear of doing any thing wrong to grieve our Saviour, often may expose them to the censures of a blind world, wherein they are like fools and babes; and those who mock them, are indeed far more wise in their generation than they. “They shall inherit the earth.” They properly inherit this world, for they have, in the presence and enjoyment of our Saviour’s love, an hundredfold more here than all they can lose or suffer on his account, and the world to come shall be theirs also. They are now the only happy people; let the weather be fair or stormy, let their state in life be easy or difficult, let them be sickly or healthy, be beloved or hated, or have much or suffer want, they are well; every morsel they eat
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is sweet, and as it were dipped in the blood of Jesus; their sufferings are the honour of enduring something from the world for Christ's sake. Their life is the life of the Son of God, their death the death of the righteous and eternal gain. Are they sick? They cannot forget, every pain helps gently to loose the silver cord and break the earthen vessel, that they may fly away and be at rest. Is the weather bad? have they long journies to go? are they exposed to trials of penury or want? how happy are they, since they shall soon arrive at the haven where they would be? No storm shall threaten them after a few days. Yet a little while and they shall hunger and thirst no more. But when the Lord their Saviour shall make a new heaven and a new earth, they shall inherit it, they shall be inhabitants with him in his new world, and shall follow him whithersoever he goeth.

“Blessed are they which hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.” The great desire and pressing after righteousness, is here and in many other places called hungering and thirsting; since no hungry man so wants bread when he is starving, no man perishing for lack of drink so longs and thirsts for water, as an awakened soul longs for the righteousness of Christ. All mankind are more or less sensible that they must be righteous, and that without holiness no man can see the Lord, but then they generally make a righteousness of their morality, duties, works and prayers, and this is always the case till the Lord's eyes try their fig-leaved, self-wrought garment; and as soon as his voice calls and awakes them from their dream, and he opens their eyes to see their nakedness and the insufficiency of all their own doings, and how far short they fall from the
righ-

righteousness which avails before God, it is no wonder that they feel distress, and begin to be in want of a better righteousness. As soon as the obedience and sufferings of Christ Jesus are preached before such people, the Holy Spirit stirs up in them such a hunger and thirst for him and his merits as is insatiable. They languish and pant for salvation as a dry land for the refreshing rain, and cannot rest till they have obtained their desire, or taken as it were the kingdom of heaven by violence, for the violent take it by force. To be in such a state, in such a hungry and eager condition, athirst for our Saviour's blood and righteousness, is a blessedness, for they shall be filled; they shall have what they want; they shall know what that means, "he will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground;" he shall be filled; or, as it is said, "he shall satiate the hungry soul with goodness;" or, as the virgin Mary expresses it, "he filleth the hungry with good things." They shall be clothed with the righteousness of our Lord Jesus; it shall be to them a white robe; they shall be secured therein, be justified thereby, be so safe, so healed, so happy and satisfied, that they shall be filled in the strictest sense, and stand compleat and perfect before God by this means, and be inwardly cleansed and blessed in their own souls. Let then such as now hunger and thirst for the Lamb and his righteousness be of good comfort, they shall be filled, they shall be satisfied with him, and have enough to all eternity.

"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy." When a soul is converted and pardoned he becomes merciful; he cannot suffer a revengeful thought; he may not be bitter, or cruel; our
Saviour

Saviour will not suffer such a spirit; it is not of him, but of the world and satan. Of Jesus we learn to be tender-hearted, long-suffering, and of a forgiving nature. It is so in our hearts; and who so cannot forgive, he is not forgiven. Let it appear or cloak itself in what manner it will, come disguised as it pleases, all revenge, barbarity, severity, and repaying evil, is sinful; but who is merciful and ready to forgive, he shall find his heavenly Father measure the same to him; and in all his mistakes and failings he shall be forgiven, and feel what a merciful Saviour he has to deal with. Hence our Saviour teaches us to pray, "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us;" and this also is his doctrine, "If ye forgive not, neither shall ye be forgiven;" or as he saith in the parable, "Did not I forgive thee when thou desiredst me? Shouldst not thou also have forgiven thy fellow-servant?"

Let then no sort of resentment have a place in our hearts; it is pride. Let no rancour, sourness, or hard thoughts, find room in our breasts; it is against our Saviour's mind. Let us be glad to forgive, ready to help the poor and needy and pity all in distress, in prisons, in debt, in affliction, in danger, in pain or sickness, in want and under oppression; and should our enemy hunger, let us rejoice to feed him; and should he thirst, let us give him to drink, and have a merciful heart and behaviour toward all men, especially to religious people and such as believe, so shall we obtain mercy and favour of God in our need; and he will not deal with us after our sins, but after the multitude of his mercies. But if we behave cruel, it shall come home to you again; behave severe, so shall others behave to you; revenge
 24 C yourselves

yourselfes at a convenient time when it is in your power, and all shall one day, sooner or later, justly be returned upon your own heads, and full measure pressed down and running over shall men heap, hard things and very bitter and heavy into your bosoms. The true way to be merciful is to learn it of our Saviour; for whoso is acquainted with him and continues in his love, is loving and merciful, so that men can perceive he has been with Jesus. "Be ye then merciful, for your Father in heaven is merciful, and ye shall obtain mercy."

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." The pure-hearted people are such as have obtained the true faith in Christ, and whose hearts have been purified through the blood he has sprinkled thereon. None are pure in heart by nature; for, by nature, all our hearts are corrupted and desperately wicked; and thence proceed all evil thoughts, lusts, murders, thefts, blasphemies, &c. which defile the man; but as soon as our Saviour besprinkles us with water, we are made clean; and when he washes us in his blood, we are whiter than snow. The eyes are no more full of adulteries, the ears no more open to filthy speaking, the heart changed and chaste and pure. They are justified, they are sanctified, and not only have made the outside of the cup or platter clean, but the inside is clean also. These are souls who have received the remission of sins, and whose souls and bodies are hallowed by the Holy Spirit, and set apart to be the temple of God. These are they who have their eyes anointed with the eye-salve and they see God; they see Jesus; they have him with them, according to his promise when he went away and said, "The world shall not see me, but ye see me;" and in the Hebrews it is written, "We see Jesus, who

who was made lower than the angels," i. e. our eyes are opened, we now see God, we view him in his bleeding form by faith and in spirit, and yet so truly and with such heart satisfaction, as if he stood bodily before us. We know he is at no distance, we behold him, and faith serves us instead of sight and is better to us than seeing for the present: "Blessed are they who have not seen and yet have believed." Besides all the happiness we have here in this respect, we shall hereafter see his face and be where he is. We shall see that loving God before whom the seraphims cover their faces. We shall see where the thorns and blows hurt and disfigured his visage. We shall see his hands and feet, we shall look upon his side, and delight and feast ourselves with this beatific vision to all eternity, when wicked men, apostates and unbelievers, shall fly from his presence in the great day, and shall hide themselves in rocks and mountains, we shall see him with joy; and all, whose hearts have been purged by his blood from dead works and purified from sin, may say, with Job, "I shall see God, and shall see him for myself and not for another." "Blessed are the pure in heart, they shall see God!"

"Blessed are the peace-makers, for they shall be called children of God." It is a satanical spirit to stir up strife, to foment and make mischief between religious people especially. Who loves divisions, disputings, janglings and tale-bearing, or is fond of finding faults or uncovering the nakedness of his fellow-servants, he is on the devil's side and joins the accuser of the brethren; such should be marked and shunned, they are the bad leaven in the lump and do much harm; but "blessed are the peace-makers." People who love unity, and

are glad to cover and hide any blemish or mistake, and even to think the best and not evil, who will not slander nor hear slander, who will not backbite nor suffer it, but who, Jesus like, could die for the brethren, and who love peace and spare no pains tenderly to root out all highness, rash and hasty words and behaviour, and who learn to be mild and gentle, and will do anything to make men at peace in one house, and to keep up that divine harmony among the children of God which becomes them, for they are one man's sons, they are brethren, and must not fall out by the way. Blessed are they who reconcile those at variance, remove the mistakes and misunderstandings that caused the evil, and who take the place of the mediator and advocate. They resemble Jesus, and are and shall be called children of God and of peace, children of their Father which is in heaven, who hates quarrels and fightings, and scatters such as delight in war.

“Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” Formerly, in the time of the law, the worshippers of God and the religious men and women did not seem to be the butt and mark of satan's malice so much as now. The prophets indeed were persecuted, and that because they generally brought heavy tidings to their own people, and were continually striking at the pride, idolatry and unfaithfulness of the children of Israel, and speaking of a new-covenant, a better priesthood, and of the salvation of the Gentiles, and other such things, which were contrary to the great ideas they had of their own religion and heavy to flesh and blood, especially their plain reproofs for sin and the threatenings with which they frequently were sent; but
else

else the Jewish church, from the time of their coming out of Egypt, were honourable and revered by all people, who saw how the Lord their God fought for them, besides the driving out whole nations and slaying kings for their sakes. He put a dread and a fear of them in all countries; they who strove against them, perished by judgments; and those who despised them, were glad to be hewers of wood or drawers of water to them. When they were small in number, one could chase a thousand, and five put five thousand to flight; the Lord was a man of war and leader of their hosts; his angels slew their enemies by thousands in a night; the skies showered down hailstones and fire on those who hated them; the stars in their courses fought against them; and only at times, when they had sinned in departing from the Lord, he suffered them to be led away captive and let their enemies be lords over them; but else they were the city of perfection, the joy of the whole earth. The pomp and glory of their church seemed to bid defiance to all the world, and this lasted till Jesus came. Our Saviour knew it would be quite otherwise after his decease, for he foresaw with what rage the devil would pursue his poor sheep, when he should come to know what their Shepherd had done by his dying for them; it was therefore our Saviour gave his disciples warning of it, as if he had told them, Little children, ye must not think my kingdom is of this world, for though hitherto Jerusalem and the family of Israel have so long flourished in the earth like a vine, and all the glory of the Gentiles have flowed to it, yet it has been for a sign and a shadow of that Jerusalem which is above, and of that church which is at present invisible in the world. The prophets, to whom

whom I opened the mystery of my redemption and who were my faithful witnesses, were a poor despised and excluded people for my sake, and the object of the scorn of satan, and the hatred of their brethren the children of Israel; they have been all persecuted, some they stoned, others were sawn asunder, and all rejected and cast out of the vineyard; so will my children and disciples be henceforth. As I have been hated, so they will hate them; and as, upon my Father's account and for doing his will, they have persecuted me, so for my sake and for my righteousness sake they will be persecuted who follow me; but esteem such blessed, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. My people above have all come out of great tribulation, and in like manner will satan try all believers; he will pursue them like a dragon and set the world against them, but let them be of good cheer, I have overcome the world; shortly they shall tread upon the adder, and the lion and the dragon shall they tread under their feet; comfort ye, comfort ye, therefore, my people; and when ye see any troubled on my account, or for the sake of my righteousness, then speak comfortably to them, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. "And even ye, blessed are ye when men shall revile you and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake, rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you."

This doctrine of our Lord Christ was soon found true; for scarcely the devil knew the world was redeemed out of his hands, and he had lost all with equity through our Saviour's death and suffering, and that now he had here but a short time, but he began to rage and raise up the kings of the earth,
and

and put the counsellors to consult together against the Lord and his Anointed. All who called on his name were persecuted, and that before the apostles had well begun their great ministry. Hence, when they preached or wrote to the churches, they taught them, that whoever would live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution. This doctrine continues unalterably the same. Now, as well as formerly, men who love our Saviour, who mention only his righteousness and are determined only to know him, will for that and no other cause be hated and reviled; men will be so inveterate against them, that they will report all manner of evil against them; men in all religions, of all sorts of tempers, will be their enemies, and separate them from their company and cast out their names as evil, will go so far as not to buy or sell with them; parents disown their children, children abhor their parents; masters discard and turn away their servants, threaten and distress such as live under them, and all this, as Luther says, 'Not because they are murderers, adulterers or thieves, but because they love Jesus Christ, and will have no God beside him, or seek or preach or value any righteousness but his, which he wrought out in obedience to the death of the cross.' It is not because they are opposers of governments, plotters against the state, idle, wicked, malicious or hurtful, but because they believe the gospel and promises of Christ, because they exalt the Lord alone, because they are witnesses of his love and mercy, and are not ashamed of his name nor his faith, because his words are weightier than all other arguments, and of more force than all demonstrations whatever beside. If this be the case, they should not be therefore discouraged or dejected, but leap
for

for joy and be exceeding glad, for so persecuted they their Lord and dear Master, and the prophets which were before them. It is an honour and glory to them to share in their Lord's shame, and follow him thus out of the camp bearing his reproach, for they shall follow him in his glory in that day when he shall come with all his angels; and then he shall confess them, and shew such as despised them how much he loved them.

Yes, surely, a day shall come when all the derided followers of the Lamb, and such as for his sake were the scorn of men and the outcasts of the people, shall be glorified in their fight who made them by a bye-word and a proverb of reproach; they shall see them with their dear Master on the clouds of heaven, and shall be forced to acknowledge, with shame and amazement, "We, fools, counted their lives madness and their end to be without honour, but see how they are numbered with the saints and have their portion with the children of God. Then shall they be truly honourable, and all nations shall call them blessed. Every blessing pronounced by the mouth of Jesus, and every blessing purchased by his blood, shall come upon them and be theirs forever.

May we also believe, so be converted, and made after our Saviour's heart, that all these blessings may come upon us, in time and to all eternity. Amen.

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F I N I S.

The DÆMONIAC.

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BEING THE
SUBSTANCE
OF A
DISCOURSE

DELIVERED IN
HAVERFORD-WEST,

In the YEAR 1753.

By JOHN CENNICK.

Come and hear all ye that fear God, and I will
declare to you what he hath done for my Soul.
Pſalm lxvi. 16.

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London. 1790.

T H E

DÆMONIAC.

L U K E viii. 37.

“Return to thine own house, and shew how great things God hath done unto thee.”

A Man who had before been possessed with a legion of devils, was set at liberty by our Saviour, and sitting at his feet cloathed and in his right mind, when observing his merciful Deliverer about to enter into a ship, and to depart from that country, intreated him to let him go along with him; but our Saviour, for his own wise and best reasons, would not suffer it then, but said to him, in the words of the text, “Return to thine house, and shew how great things God hath done unto thee;” or, as St. Mark relates it; “Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee,” Mark v. 19.

There was something very singular in this man's disorder, the manner of his cure, and deliverance;

as well as in our Lord's not suffering him to go with him, of all which I purpose to consider a little, before I speak directly of the words of the text.

We have no room to doubt of many wonderful possessions besides this and others in the time of our Saviour, in the first ages of the church, in the days of the reformation, and even now in our own time. Exorcisms were frequently used among the primitive christians; with fastings and prayers they sought the deliverance of such people, and certainly found the prayers of faith availed much in such cases.

I see no reason why the gift of casting out devils and dispossessing evil spirits in the name of the Lord Jesus, should not now be given, as well as formerly, unless on account of the incredulity of this sinful and adulterous generation, who atheistically would either mock at the cure, as if it was more imposture and art, or pretend it was a natural disease and no possession of the devil; or if such immediate cures should be wrought in our times, if the miracle could not be denied with any good ground, they would say it was sorcery, conjuration, and dealing with the devil; for so it went of old, and hindered our Master to do many mighty works in his own city Nazareth, because of unbelief. By whatever means a soul in the hands of satan is released, it must be confessed our Saviour is the cause. He only can preach deliverance to the captives, and loose them that satan hath bound in body or soul. He alone has the right to say, it shall not stand, when a covenant is made with death and a league with hell. Isa. xxviii. 18. At his word, and in his name, a host of devils, and legions of wicked spirits must fly. With a word he can
release

release a soul, let its case be bad and deplorable as it will.

Though some are in a particular manner possessed of the devil, and it is above the reach of any human creature to account for their disorder and behaviour, &c. yet in another sense I esteem all distracted and mad people possessed; and this has been also the mind of many children of God, and learned and pious men, and has some ground in the scripture. We read of a certain father who besought Christ for his Son, who was lunatic, and when the child was brought to him he rebuked the devil, and he departed out of him, Matt. xvii. 14. &c. But all the behaviour of Dæmoniacs or possessed persons, of which we have often long accounts in the gospel, answers to that of lunatics, or mad people, in our times. I will only observe, in a few instances, how nearly they resemble each other; 1st, their being able to break their chains; 2dly, loving to roam in solitary places among tombs; 3dly, going naked; 4thly, not being to be tamed easily; 5thly, casting themselves into the fire and water, cutting themselves, and uttering blasphemies and such words as must come immediately from the devil. And farther, we may observe daily, that however unapt persons have been to do any of these things before, after they have been once turned in their heads, as the expression is, they do it all eagerly, and another spirit rules, and something supernatural shews itself soon; they can endure hunger, cold, and hardships surprisingly, and travel, rage, labour, and speak on without sleeping, to a wonder. All this I have said, as my reasons for thinking lunatics possessed people; and I have observed, the generally known causes of
madness

madness have not been any humility, meekness of spirit, or even a religious disposition, but rather an extreme love of the creature, or, I would say, lust; also often an intolerable pride in the learned, who will account for every thing and comprehend like God. Sometimes an excess of anger and fury, or a known and abhorred self-conceitedness, fondness of fine cloaths, of riches, of beauty, or honour, and often a being awakened in a legal manner, and in attempting to make themselves perfect and righteous, and to attain to certain lengths in their own strength and by their own works, is a means of some people's falling into this unhappy condition. But here it must be observed, that self-righteousness is at the bottom of all; for who have heard of a poor sinner's coming into such distress, I mean one poor in spirit, who is conscious of his lost estate and incapacity to help himself, but who sinks before our Saviour, under a sense of his own wants and miseries, and yet is well convinced no one can help or ease him beside Jesus, such an one does not rage because he cannot achieve high things, nor grow impatient because he cannot cleanse himself; but he rejoiceth that the Lamb has loved sinners and will receive them; he is glad of the fountain of his blood and washes there; and though he may have been greatly withstood by the enemy, and has felt the weight of his guilt like a heavy burden, and, like Paul, could neither eat or drink for want of mercy, this must not be looked upon as madness; (would to God all the world were so mad!) no, this is quite a different condition; no wild fire rages here, no blasphemous speeches come out of the mouth; no, all is the effect of a real hunger and thirst for righteousness, and a longing to be

be forgiven, and such shall surely obtain their wishes; let them tarry the Lord's leisure, and he shall comfort them; let them wait upon him, and he will help them, and not one of them shall perish.

But though I have said so much, I would not be misunderstood, as though I thought all such possessed or mad persons should be lost. I have far more favourable thoughts, and hope rather these may possibly be some of those who are given over to the devil for the destruction of the flesh, that their spirits might be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. Perhaps such heavy chastisements may have befallen them here, that they may find mercy hereafter.

I will now proceed to speak of the man in the text, whom I look upon, in his worst estate, as a lively picture and emblem of every carnal and natural man.

When our Saviour landed in the country of the Gadareans, a man met him who for a long time had been possessed of devils; he wore no cloaths, he dwelt in no house; no bonds or chains could bind him, but he brake all, and abode in the mountains and in the tombs, crying and cutting himself with stones: This is the description of his sad estate, and how nicely does it agree with the spiritual sad estate of a natural man? He wears no cloaths before God, but, as long as he is without Christ's righteousness, as long as he is not made all glorious within, nor covered with the covering of God's Spirit, he is naked; all his sins and secret uncleannesses, all his falls and corrupted nature is open and naked before the Lord and all the angels, and except Jesus and his righteousness cover his sin and hide his iniquity, he will find himself in a shameful state, when God's eyes

eyes of fire try the secrets of all hearts. May I not also say, he has an unclean spirit? Do not his impurities and lusts rule him? Are not his eyes full of adultery, his lips full of unclean songs and jests? His hands and heart are they not unclean? And may it not be said with all propriety, he has been possessed of devils a long time? for ever since the fall, satan has had us all, as it were, in his hands and in his possession; but especially is he in his hands whom no laws of God can tame, no commandment nor threatnings bind, no loving intreaties keep within bounds, but he breaks all, and at all events and hazards is a bond-servant of the devil. His will, his desires, his appetite, his affections and lusts, his pride and passions break through, and no man can tame him. He dwells in no house of God, is not in the fold of the good Shepherd, nor does he nor can he love them that are. He lives among the tombs, among the dead; he loves those who are dead in sin, and the dead and dry conversation of the world suits him; he lives in pleasure, and is dead while he lives. He cries and cuts himself; this directly answers to his sinning against all the convictions of the Holy Ghost and his own conscience; he takes a certain pleasure in cutting and tormenting himself, and though the horror and pain which at times he must feel, must extort from him bitter cries, yet madly he rushes forward, "as the horse into the battle," and adds sin to sin and gall wormwood!

It is as remarkable, that when our Saviour came in sight, "he fell down and besought him not to torment him, but let him alone," and asks, "What have I to do with thee, O Jesus, thou Son of God?" So afraid are people in their lost estate of being saved
out

out of it. They dread our Saviour's deliverance, and are angry to be stopped in their course. They would be glad if Jesus would let them alone, and not trouble them with convictions, nor look upon them as he did on Peter, or speak to their hearts as to Paul, "Why persecutest thou me?" Could they have their wish, their own will, then they would enjoy their health, be very rich and honourable, live long in pleasures, eat, drink, and be merry, and quite forget there is a world to come, an eternal judgement; for when our Saviour at any time mercifully brings these things to mind, or would reason with their hearts, and ask, Why will ye die? they are afraid, and say to him as Felix did to Paul, "Go thy way for this time," or beseech him, like the man in the text, "Jesus torment me not; let me alone thou Son of God." Poor people! who are mad, if these are not? They call the children of God mad, and count them beside themselves; but none are so truly beside themselves, as such who rashly venture on, and will not be saved from their sins. On the other hand, those whose lives they count madness, are the only people who are in their right mind; for they have laid up treasures in heaven, they have found the Pearl of great price, and laid hold on eternal life; they have true and real pleasures, without the sting with which temporal enjoyments end, and possess a solid and lasting peace, which passeth all understanding.

But I must observe, all this intreating of our Saviour not to torment him, and worshipping him, &c. was not till Jesus had commanded the unclean spirits to come out. Satan would fain have kept his hold, and that is the reason why every where he makes such a noise and stir where he is likely to lose a soul; and he knows, should the work of

our Saviour go on, he must quit his possession and be gone. It seems not one wicked spirit alone had seized this poor man, but many, and therefore he said, "My name is Legion;" but even this is written for our instruction; for there are people who have been divinely called, and Jesus has cast out the strong man armed, viz. satan, who kept the house and spoiled his goods, abolished the old crimes, and tore to pieces the pride, quenched the lusts, and trampled upon their honour, and cleansed the nest of every unclean and hateful bird, and made the den of thieves an house of prayer. But the careless hearts again have wandered from the Lord, their love grown cold, and the evil spirit that had constantly sought to return to the place whence he came out, at last gets admission, and he brings many others more wicked than himself, and they come and make their abode there, and the last estate of such people is worse than the first, and, as it were, a legion guard them, lest another attempt should be made to rescue them: And perhaps this might have been the case of Mary Magdalene, and very likely of this poor man, who nevertheless found mercy; and the accounts of their salvation are handed down to us, to teach us, that though some have made their last state worse than the first, and have become seven times more the children of the devil than they were before, though they have sinned away all grace, and left the fountain of living waters, and though satan has bound them as with a legion, yet even in this case it is no where said, they cannot be saved, for Jesus can yet deliver them. If they had made a covenant with death and a league with hell, he knows how to dissolve the conditions and obligations with the blood of his New Testament. Let not souls who
fear

fear they are in such a state be hopeless or despair, "there is yet balm in Gilead, there is still a physician there," one who can break asunder the bars of iron and brass, and bring the prisoners out of captivity, and heal such as are oppressed of the devil, his name is Jesus, and he has the keys of hell and death. No god can deliver after this manner, nor save as he saves. How did the whole legion move at his word? Had all the wicked spirits in the bottomless pit possessed the man, it had been the same thing, at the word of our Saviour all must have yielded, and when he commands, Give up, let my people go, it is done. Let then such souls who lie under any dreadful apprehensions of this sort, apply to him, he will be their Saviour, he will stand their Friend, and they shall know that "he hears the poor when he crieth, the needy, and him that has no helper."

When the devils found they must depart, they begged leave to enter a herd of swine which were feeding near the place, and when they had obtained leave, presently the whole herd, about two thousand, ran violently down a steep place into the sea, and were choaked, to the amazement of all those that followed Jesus, and those who kept the swine. I know there are some people who have even dared to ask, With what right our Saviour could cause such a loss to the owners of the swine, and at once perhaps reduce them to poverty? These might as well ask, atheistically, Why a high wind at sea may overwhelm a ship, and ruin the master? or, Why an earthquake shall swallow up a whole town? or a fire be permitted to make many families desolate in a few hours?

I wonder any called christians would even suffer the thought, since they confess that Jesus is the Lord, and all is his in heaven and earth. It is no injustice in him to take all away from us in a moment, and should he do it, who can ask him, What dost thou? Are not all the beasts of the forest his, and all the cattle upon a thousand hills? Cannot he do what he will with his own? But then, say some, it looks as if he could be pleased in the ruin and distress of his poor creatures. No, by no means; we have no grief which does not touch his heart: He could therefore in the days of his flesh so readily weep and be affected, when he saw Mary and Martha weeping over their brother's grave, or the widow of Nain lamenting over her dead son. Scarce a blind, a lame, or leprous person came in his way but he had compassion on them, and knew, if sin had not been in the world none of all this could have happened; therefore his heart always pitied, and his hand was always stretched out to save the oppressed, and that often before it was asked. When therefore satan has leave or permission to do harm in the world, to raise storms, to cause wars and bloodshed, or make families desolate by fire or water, or bring a murrain among beasts, the best way, and most becoming humble and meek children, is to think, "his ways are in the deep waters; and his footsteps are not known," and wait till the day when he shall make his just dealings as clear as the light, and his righteousness as the noon day. So much may be said, that without doubt it has been the means of bringing many to heaven, that in this world they met with many losses, crosses, and trials, were poor, and stripped of all things. He is a God of equity, he often takes away temporals

to give us eternal happiness. He tries his children often, like Lazarus at Dives's gate, that he may give them their comforts and possessions in a city that has foundations, in a kingdom which cannot be shaken. Doubtless many that are now in heaven adore the Lord that once in the world he put forth his hand and touched all that they had, though they at the time did not know why it was, but were ready to think like Naomi, "Call my name Marah, for the Lord hath dealt bitterly by me; now they confess with joy, "It was good for me that I have been afflicted." On the other hand, many who have perished, now lament that here they had their portion, and in this life. He gave them their desire, and sent leanness withal into their souls. Of what advantage was it to Dives to be cloathed with scarlet and purple, to drink and feast with his five brethren, and afterwards be cloathed with scarlet flames, and want a drop of water to cool his tongue? Of what real benefit has it been, think ye, that some have so prospered in the world, and come into no misfortune like other folk, neither were plagued like other men, their bull did not fail, nor their cow cast her calf, they had gold like dust, and were obliged to pull down their barns to build greater, when God, in the midst of all their plenty and fulness, calls them to eternity with, "Thou fool, this night shall thy soul be required of thee?" Let it therefore satisfy thee, when any trials or losses befall thee, that he that sits in heaven rules all things well, and trouble not thyself because of the destruction of the herd or swine, thou dost not know but that it was the only way to convince the owners and keepers of them who Jesus was; and though, like Peter, they prayed him to depart from them for the present, perhaps it
was

was only out of a deep sense of their unworthiness to have him upon their land; and very likely thou mayest see them with a better inheritance, in the day when he shall deal in righteousness and mercy to all the nations. I will leave them therefore here, and pursue my design, and speak of the once unhappy but now highly favoured man. He was just now in the possession of many devils, but now in the care of the Saviour and Bridegroom of his soul. He was lately raving up and down the mountains, and restlessly wandering in the wilderness, but now he sits at Jesus's feet, and has found out eternal rest. He was before wild, so that no man could tame him, nor cords nor fetters bind him, but now is in his right mind. He hears the voice of the Son of man and lives. He chuses the good part, which shall never be taken away. This is indeed to be in one's right mind. He a little while ago wore no cloaths, but is now cloathed, body and soul, and the shame of his nakedness shall not appear. He was his own tormentor, and cut himself with stones, but now he sits under the shadow of the Sun of righteousness, who is risen upon him with healing in his wings. He used formerly only to frequent the tombs and gloomy and desolate places, now see he is among the living, and has found everlasting life in the Lord his God. O happy man! happy situation! happy place! happy change! May all the spiritually mad and possessed share like thee the unbounded and free sovereign grace of our dear Redeemer!

But now, when the Lord hath done his Father's business in these parts, and was ready again to go into the ship, the man, on whom he had shewed so much mercy, prayed him to let him go with him, but Jesus suffered him not for the present, but
said

said to him, "Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord has done for thee, and has had compassion on thee." As if he would have said, Hereafter shalt thou follow me and be with me for ever, but now go and tell of thy deliverance to thy poor relations and friends; thou hast been heretofore a burden and grief to them, they have shared deeply in thine affliction, go and let them partake of thy joys and mercies, tell them what a merciful and compassionate Lord and Saviour thou hast found, and be a preacher of free grace to them, that they may come also after me and be my disciples.

It seems also strange that he who was continually calling men to him, and who let Bartimeus and others whom he had healed follow him, should now make exceptions against this poor man's coming after him, or refusing him that mercy which all were invited to; but this was certainly the reason our Saviour had for not allowing him then, he knew how many friends, relations, and neighbours he had who were not called to the kingdom, and therefore appoints his new convert to be his witness and preacher, that through his mercy others might obtain mercy and be saved. He could go and tell them what an unhappy wretch he once was, how satan made him his tool and slave, how he had lived without peace, without rest or comfort, and without God in the world, but now could he say, I that was afar off, am brought nigh to God: I that was a stranger to him, am now a fellow-citizen with the saints and with the household of God: I once wandered, and was as a sheep that went astray, but the Shepherd of Israel, the Keeper of Jacob, has sought me and brought me back to the Bishop of my soul. The more I served satan the more miserable I was; night and day I was unhappy: A legion once possessed me, and the enemy thought

thought to have his desire and fulfil his lust upon me, but I am now saved, I have now obtained deliverance, and am now a monument of God's unmerited and free love. I do not doubt but many also of his friends, who saw and heard him when he did return home, believed and were set on thirst to be acquainted with Jesus; they saw before them one who a few days before was in the most deplorable condition of all creatures under heaven, now a saint, a saved man, a blessed witness that there is salvation, and one against whom the gates of hell cannot prevail, and so could not help longing to become his disciples, and partake with their friend his great mercy and liberty. I believe, if it was not for this, it would be far better for us and all the children of God, as soon as they are converted, to be taken home to our Saviour directly, out of all danger of grieving him again, or relapsing into coldness or carelessness. But our Saviour's mind is, that we should go home to our friends, and tell them what great things the Lord hath done for us, and how he has had compassion upon us, and not come home to him till we have brought others also with us to see Jesus, thus are we like sheep come from the washing brook, every one bearing twins. In this sense, therefore, even our sons and daughters, our servants and handmaids must prophecy, and tell what the Lord has done for their souls.

If the Redeemer should call home his children as soon as he had pardoned them, he would have then no church upon earth, and the awakened souls would have no fold, no one to comfort them, but like poor orphans would live like the most desolate people indeed. We should not then be too eager to beseech our Saviour to follow him home, till he please;

please; it is better to be resigned, and so live, so wait upon him, so speak, so labour, and believe in the world, that at any time when he calls for us we may be ready to go and follow him upon mount Sion, and go no more out. This shall soon be our destiny, we shall quickly go to him and see his face. Let us for the present help our friends and neighbours, and be as salt in the earth. Let us tell them what we have experienced, and how the Lord has had compassion upon us. Let us blaze abroad his fame, and be ready to give every one a reason of the hope that is in us, and relate how we were when in our first estate, how we were by nature children of wrath, giddy and careless, and led captive by the devil at his will, how we were when awakened, how athirst for mercy and forgiveness, how we found grace, and were found out and washed and healed by the Good Shepherd, in whose blood and righteousness we have been cleansed, and covered, and cloathed, and now can sit down at Jesus's feet in our right mind. How our hearts leaped within us for joy when the blessed moment approached wherein we were visited by the Day-spring from on high, and when God our Saviour took away the unclean spirit, and put his Holy Spirit within us. But perhaps many hear me to-day, who, if bid go home and tell their friends what great things the Lord has done for them, could say nothing, having never experienced his pardoning mercy nor seen his salvation. People who perhaps can only tell how God has kept them from want, how he has raised them from sickness, given them friends, kept off their enemies, and provided wonderfully for them in the world, saved them from many dangers, given them to be born and educated in a christian land, and trained them up in the best church,

in the happiest constitution, given them their right senses, &c. All this is well; but this the Deist, the Turk, the Jew blesses God for, as much as you; this is not the one thing needful, the main and chief blessing, for that is the revealing Christ in the heart, the releasing and translating the soul out of the kingdom of satan into the kingdom of God's dear Son, the snatching them out of the world and sin, as brands out of the burning, the overflowing all their vicious and unruly passions, lusts, and inclinations, with his death, sweat, and blood, and so washing the inner man in the laver of regeneration, and giving him a new birth, and the witness of the Spirit with their spirit that they are the children of God. O that ye all knew this, and could go home to your friends and tell them this joyful news, I was lost, but am now found; I was once dead, and knew not Jesus; I was a servant and vassal to his enemy, and to the world, and even despised the liberty of the Lord my God, and put his salvation far from me; but the Lord has had compassion upon me, he has done great things for me, and holy is his name; he has now opened my eyes, and I see my part in his merits; he has opened my ears, and I have heard the voice of the Son of God, and live an eternal life. He burst in pieces the chains that made me a prisoner, and delivered me into the glorious liberty of the children of God. I now roam no more for happiness in vain; I now am no more unhappy; I sit down like Mary, and like the man once possessed of the legion, at Christ Jesus's feet, clothed with his salvation as with a garment, and with his righteousness as with a robe, and am now set to rights and saved, and in a right mind. May the merciful and compassionate Lord of all awaken every one to a true sense of his natural, bad, and wild estate, and
save

give you thus; and till he takes you home to his Father's house to be with him for ever; may you have grace to tell thus his tender mercies to others! And all ministers, may it be given to them in particular that they may do it, till having won many thereby to the kingdom, and turned many to righteousness, they may return home in a good time, and in their last hours, when they shall pray our Saviour to suffer them to follow him, he may say, "Come up hither," and so they be for ever and ever with the Lord. O Lamb of God, grant this to my soul. Amen.

F I N I S.

[illegible]

20 MA 59

Dives and Lazarus.

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BEING THE
SUBSTANCE
OF A
DISCOURSE

Delivered in DUBLIN,

In the YEAR 1753.

By. JOHN CENNICK.

Behold therefore the Goodness and Severity of God.
Rom. xi. 22.

THE FIFTH EDITION.

LONDON:

Printed and sold by H. TRAPP, No. 1, Pater-
noster-Row. 1790.

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DISCOUSE



BY JOHN C. SMITH

Illustrated by J. C. Smith

THE FIFTH EDITION

LONDON

Printed and Published by H. K. Smith, 11, Strand, London, W.C.

Dives and Lazarus.

LUKE xvi. 31.

“ If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead.”

WITH these words our Saviour concludes the parable of Dives and Lazarus; wherein (after shewing the unhappy state of such as are rich, but without him, and the blessed condition of the poor who are in his favour) he makes Dives to pray out of his torment that Lazarus might go and preach to his five brethren, lest they should also perish; but Abraham, to whom he prayed, answered him, that they had the scriptures, “ They have, saith he, Moses and the prophets, let them hear them.” Dives still thinks that if Lazarus went from the dead, and appeared to them in the height of their mirth

and banqueting, assuring them that their brother, who had lived like them in pleasure, was now lost, and so warn them to repent, that it would have a better effect than all preaching; but Abraham tells him, "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither would they be persuaded though one rose from the dead."

In this parable our Saviour has greatly honoured the sacred scriptures, and taught all his people in future ages to think exceedingly reverently of the words of God, besides warning the rich and such as have this world's goods, lest they have their portion in this life, and teaching common people and such as are poor and in adversity, that they may set their affections on things above, and have treasure in heaven.

There are many lessons to be learned through the whole; and as all these parables were spoken for the instruction of the sincere followers of Christ, that they may be wise to eternal life, shunning every danger, and escaping the wrath to come, I wish all who are my hearers to-day may give the greater attention while I speak a few words on this parable, and make some observations in the course of reading it.

Our Saviour delivers the parable thus, "There was a certain rich man which was cloathed in purple and fine linen, and who fared sumptuously every day." This is the description of what the world calls a happy man. He was rich, and so a stranger to want, nakedness, and all the miseries of that kind which poor people are subject to. He did not know what it was to be pinched with hunger, suffer thirst, or cold, or weariness; no oppressing creditors bore hard upon him, nor was he made to serve under the rigour of superiors.
He

He had many servants, a fine house, and perhaps slept on beds of down and ivory. His riches kept him in favour with his friends, and carried him above the envy and contempt of his foes. I doubt not but he had often thanked God that he was rich, and rejoiced that his fortune was so considerable in the world.

“ He was cloathed in purple.” The Tyrian purple of the ancients was of all colours the most costly, so that none but kings and persons of the first rank in the world wore it. This was his dress, and adorned, I suppose, with embroidery and gold; beside, he had fine linen, and all that could serve to make him splendid and comfortable. Nor was he only rich, and thus grand and princely in his apparel, but “ he fared sumptuously every day.” He had not often his table spread with delicacies, but always. Every day the fat of the land, the most precious fruits, the daintiest victuals came before him. Nor was he alone, his five brethren lived the same luxurious and high life; they had doubtless the best company, and plenty of wine, and drank strong drinks out of cups of silver and gold. All round waited their servants, and subjects, and dancing, and music, and merry discourse passed their many days and nights away pleasantly. Had one seen them singing over their bowls of rich wines, or wantonly sporting with harlots, without care, without bounds to their excess and pleasures, high with honour and respect, full of mirth, and loaded with riches, one might have thought, how happy is this rich man in his company! No doubt he had heard the law, for he was a child of Abraham; he had been sometimes present when the prophets were read, but it had no great effect upon him; perhaps he had rode in his chariot on certain
days

days, and frequented thus the temple and synagogues out of fashion, or to divert away a spare hour, but his heart was untouched with any thing he heard; perhaps the priests whom he chose to hear, prophesied smooth things, and he liked to have it so. He contemned the mopes in religion, and such as were devoted to sacred things, as half mad men, melancholy, persons of no taste, and enthusiasts, and would not be such a fool to let over much religion destroy him.

In short, he seemed at first view to be a vessel of honour, and highly favoured, a man whom heaven had blessed, and to whom God had opened his hand and been doubly liberal. There are thousands who have wished to be thus happy, and perhaps many of us now present can lay our hand on our heart and say, I am the man.

In the same city, and in the same country with this great man, was "a certain poor person, a beggar, named Lazarus, who lay at the rich man's gate full of sores, desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table," who had no friends or company, excepting the dogs who came and licked his sores. Behold one as miserable as the other was happy! He seemed to be neglected by all his fellow-creatures, and an out-cast of the God of nature, a vessel of disgrace and dishonour. He had no sponable and wealthy friends, but was left an orphan, and exposed to the piercing afflictions of want and poverty. He had no house, but lay at the gate of Dives; had no bed but the ground; was sick and full of wounds, and had no physician, no comfortable cordial, no plaister, no friend or pitying neighbour. While the one in the house rolled in plenty, he languished with hunger, and all his moans and cries, though only for "the crumbs

crumbs which fell from the table," were unheard and unregarded. He had no cloaths but rags, so that the cold pinched him without, and hunger and sickness within. Instead of pitying the poor beggar, it seems as if those of the house had set the dogs at him to drive him from the door, who were more merciful than their master, "they licked his sores." This was all the ease and comfort he had; and thus between sickness, hunger, and nakedness he was worn out, and at last died.

All that passed by him must surely have felt a certain chill and horror at the sight of his wretched corpse, and esteemed his end miserable. It is likely his bones were laid in some ditch, or buried among dunghills, and to all outward appearance one should have concluded, this man lived and died unhappy to the last degree; but therein, such as judged after a human way would have been sadly mistaken, that poor man was at peace with God, he had made a blessed use of his affliction, out of the deep of it he had cried to the Lord and was heard; he had made his part sure in the book of life, and in the favour of the Lord his God. It is true, he had little or none of the good things of this world, his eyes had been often red with weeping, and his poor heart inured to distress and sighing, but he had obtained the love of God, and knew his Redeemer lived; this comforted him till the angel of death released him, and he died. There was then an end to his penury and needs; all the tears were wiped away from his eyes, all sorrow left his aching heart; his sickness sunk his spirits and weighed him down no more; no more his wounds and sores smarted, nor his hunger pinched his poor carcase; he heard no more the menaces and threatnings of such as would not relieve him; no, all was over now
and

and "the angels carried him to Abraham's bosom." While his body was finding a rest in some nasty but quiet spot, the blessed spirits who stood round him as he died, and who waited for the appointed moment, now sung him up to the paradise of God. How sweet was heaven to his weary soul! how sweet, how transporting the kingdom to him, who had been a beggar and the outcast of all the world? He could not any more weep at his hard lot, or sigh that he had been so poor; he rather could adore before the throne that he had been afflicted, and saved from "trusting to uncertain riches," and weaned from the world, and that a better portion had been designed for him by his merciful Creator. O how must he bless the wisdom of God, and his unsearchable goodness in saving him, and for changing his want to eternal riches, his rags to God's righteousness, his dunghill to a throne, and his poor troublesome life to a life eternal! instead of dogs to lick his sores, angels attend him and hail him to his thrice blessed home and harbour, where he shall rest for ever and ever!

But now we will leave him in his glory and return to the rich glutton in his pomp and splendor, "who also died and was buried." All his gold and silver could not purchase him a renewal, or longer term of life; he died, and left all his companions, his costly furniture, his fine raiment, and plentiful table; he died and went into another state, whither his gold could not be carried, "neither could his pomp follow him." There is no mention made of the beggar's funeral, it was too mean and insignificant to notice; if he was not cast out into the open fields to the beasts and birds of prey, it is likely, as I before observed, he was buried with the burial of an ass; but Dives was buried:

He,

He, no doubt, was laid in state, and his hearse attended with mourners, and such as were skilful in lamentation, and in solemn magnificence interred in the sepulchres of his fathers; but O! while his brethren and friends were bearing their once rich brother with such splendor to the grave, his soul sunk down to hell, "and in hell he lift up his eyes being in torments, and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom." Amazing change! his pleasures are turned to torments, his riches to eternal wants, his scarlet and purple robes to purple and scarlet flames of fire, his bowls of new wine to insatiable thirst, his music to howlings, his fine house to the bottomless pit, his brethren and merry company to devils and wicked spirits. "He lifted up his eyes," but saw no more grandeur and delicate things; he should have opened them before, and have seen the things that made for his peace, but now they were hid from him, he opened his eyes too late. It is true, he saw Abraham and Lazarus in glory, but it was afar off; yes, there he saw the same beggar he suffered to perish without mercy at his gate; he saw him now in the bosom of the friend of God; he beheld him who was once unworthy his notice, sitting among the favourites of the God of Abraham; and he who had scarce any covering, while Dives wallowed in riches and was cloathed with purple and fine linen, now was cloathed with the white and fine linen, which is the righteousness of the saints, and in which they stand without spot before the throne. He had not minded his cries once, but now he cries for his help; "and he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy upon me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am tormented in this flame." He perhaps had never pray-

ed before, and now prays when it is too late, but he prayed to Abraham. It is the only prayer in the scripture made to the saints, and is a prayer made in vain. He called Abraham, father, but found it not avail to have had believing or good parents, without having their experience of the love of God, and trod the steps of the faith of Abraham. No more strong drink and new wine refreshed him; he begs not a drop of water, but less if possible, for he prays only that "Lazarus might dip the tip of his finger in water to cool his tongue." See how he intreats mercy from him to whom he would shew no mercy! Thus shall it be in the day when Jesus comes; then the despised and persecuted few, who loved him in the world, and who for his sake were hated, abused, slandered, reviled, and as it were, "killed all the day long," shall be honourable in their fight who slighted and used them ill. They shall then worship at their feet, and sue for mercy with shame and confusion. This honour shall have all the saints. Thus Dives behaves to Lazarus, when he intreats Abraham to send him to ease him. "Have mercy upon me, he says, my father Abraham." This would have been a pretty prayer if made to the Father of mercies, and made in "the day of grace, and in the acceptable year of the Lord;" but now Abraham answers, "Son, remember that thou in thy life-time receivedst thy good things, and Lazarus his evil things, but now he is comforted and thou art tormented." Abraham calls him son, but it did him no good; he expostulates with him, and shews the equitable dealings of justice; he bids him "remember, that once as he loved the world and the things of the world, so he had them, and had his portion in this life; and as he slighted grace, and the riches and things of the life to come, so they were

were far from him." On the other hand he says, "Poor Lazarus, who had no good things here, but was a man of sorrows, was not of the world, but chose his part above, so the world hated him and forsook him; but now he is arrived to his treasure, and shall be comforted for evermore.

Hear this, ye who count them happy who live in pleasure, and who make merry as in a day of slaughter! ye, who are continually heaping up gold, and "who fare sumptuously every day!" ye, who ride on horses and in chariots, and feel no evil! and ye who are continually wishing for honour, and desiring to be great and rich, or to enjoy large possessions in the world, O hear it and tremble, and change your wishes into prayers for mercy, and a part at God's right hand! Remember, "they that love the world and the things of the world, have not the love of the Father in them; and that a man cannot be a friend of the world without being an enemy of God." Desire not then to have here a fulness, but if you have it, behave as stewards of "the mammon of unrighteousness," and remember the strict account you must one day make. Have you no more than food, and raiment convenient? be content, and know you are better off than your Lord. Or do you suffer want, or are poor? pray to have Lazarus's sure kingdom in the better world, and be not unhappy with cares, but give up yourselves and your wants to the care of your heavenly Father, who careth for you. Let not riches, or finery, or gay apparel, or pleasures, or wantonness, or lusts be a snare to you; be released from all, and "touch not the unclean thing;" keep out of the danger, and follow your plain and lowly Lord through the world, and have your glory where it is eternal, and let your riches be durable riches and righteousness.

Many

Many have made another choice, and repented it for ever. Abraham tells Dives, that there was now no passing from one state and place to the other; a gulph, an infinite space was between. When he found this, he prays Abraham, at least, to let Lazarus go to his father's house, where his brethren lived in the same wicked way, to preach and forewarn them, lest they should come into the same torment and perish in the same way. Abraham answers, "they have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them. Nay, he said, father Abraham, but if one would rise from the dead they would repent." As if he would say, "O! I know how it was with me, I know how I jeered such as spoke of danger; I know their thoughts of all preaching, they slight it as I did; they despise the scriptures, and atheistically mock religion, but if such an one as Lazarus, whom they knew to be dead, would go and appear to them, and tell them, Your brother is in eternal flames, he is lost, and crying out in his torments, repent or you shall all likewise perish, then they would hear." But Abraham tells him, if they will not hearken to the law and to the testimony, if the word of God has no effect, and they regard not Moses and the prophets, "neither would they be persuaded though one rose from the dead." They would still in their wanton manner scoff, and endeavour to account for it in a natural way; they would deem it fancy, or a juggle of the religious, or look upon it as a dream, and harden their hearts still more. If a message from the Lord God of their fathers is not received, nor the testimony of his children, the witnesses, then no miracle would be of service, and if one rose from the dead it would be in vain.

It should not seem that Dives's fear of having his brethren and wicked companions follow him into his

his misery, came out of love or compassion for them, so much as his dread of their increasing his pain and plagues, since he had helped them on in sin, had been the abettor of their evil deeds, and encouraged them to drink, game, whore, revel, blaspheme, and be infidels and irreligious to their ruin. He knew how it must add to his woes, to be the cause of their judgment and damnation, and therefore would by all means have hindered it; but all was gone too far, it was too late, and he left to feel the heavy wages of sin, with all the dreadful consequences which increase perpetually.

It is indeed a striking parable, and meant mercifully to comfort the poor and distressed people, by pointing to the kingdom where they are encouraged to seek their portion, and to apply to our Saviour, that he may forgive them their sins, and make them "heirs of a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and of treasure that no moth nor rust can corrupt, nor thief break thro' and steal." O that all the common people, the poor, the indigent, the outwardly miserable and afflicted people would by means of this parable come to him who spake it, and obtain of him Lazarus's portion. He spake it for this end, and this was his chief view. Let not your heavy circumstances in this world, your pressing necessities, weigh you down too much, and make you lose your confidence in the Friend of sinners, nor let it put you upon worldly and unlawful means to extricate yourselves, nor tempt you to murmur or complain; but take it in good part, and be satisfied with your evil things, and seek to have your good things with Jesus and his disciples in another world. Now before you are called away, beseech him to give you a true and living faith in him, that thereby you may be persuaded of his everlasting love to you, the feeling of which will keep you happy, and

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at peace, under the most pressing and grievous trials ; it will sweeten your passage through the world, and comfort you beyond all you can think or wish.

When you have no friend or dear companion, you will not be destitute, he will be near to you, he "will never leave nor forsake you." Instead of riches you shall have his merits, his kingdom, the treasures of his peace and salvation ; you shall not want, you shall be happy, and your latter end will be blessed ; the holy angels shall carry you home, and Jesus, your dear Saviour Jesus shall kiss you and take you in peace to himself. Till then be content to be here a pilgrim and stranger, a poor and needy follower of the Lamb ; be content to be hated, to be dishonourable and despised ; in a very little while you shall see all the cloud blow over, and the time of the singing of birds shall come ; you shall go into your Master's joy, and into the house he prepared for you in the New Jerusalem, to go no more out world without end.

Our Saviour had this also in view in this parable, namely, to warn kindly the wild, the rash, the giddy and wanton part of mankind to escape the perils and sad estate of such as hear not the loving calls of his Holy Spirit, but eagerly covet the world and seek happiness there, and so miss the kingdom of God. The rich, the gluttonous, the epicure, the miser, the lustful, the lovers of pleasure and the world are in a dangerous condition ; they can easily be deceived and cry, Peace, peace to their hearts, while the world smiles, and they prosper and go on undisturbed, till suddenly they are summoned to depart this life, and, like foolish virgins, they awake out of the pleasing delusion, and are miserable for ever.

But our Saviour had yet in view to magnify the scriptures and make them honourable. They are
his

his true sayings, and may not be trifled with, despised, or slighted. Who looks for miracles and wonders, and thinks he could be converted by that means, and thinks little of the oracles of God, he is a deceived person. The scriptures are never alone, but the power of God always accompanies them, so that with majesty they are founded to the heart, and with a divine conviction that they are from heaven. If therefore a man has so long disregarded the striving of the Spirit with him, that by little and little he ceases to respect the scripture, and at last is no longer persuaded to hear them, is no longer to be convinced by them, nor looks to experience the precious promises they contain, nor is awed by the threatnings, nor courted or prevailed upon by the intreaties and calls therein, but is willingly ignorant of them, is dead to all they say, opposes manifest truths declared therein, and can venture to dispute doctrines, which in his conscience he believes are taught there, and was the mind of Jesus and his disciples, then it is gone far indeed, and the rising of one from the dead to attempt his conversion might be dreaded, and thought to be in vain.

As the apostle of our profession humbled himself to read out of the scriptures, reasoned out of them with men, with his disciples, "and expounded out of them the things concerning himself," and also therewith answered the tempter to set us a pattern, let us be his followers, and, as it is written, so believe, so act in every thing, that we may not only shew to others we believe and are disciples of him whose oracles they are, but also happily experience the fulfilling of the promises in our hearts, and be witnesses that they are the true and faithful, to the glory of Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom be praise and blessings for ever and ever! Amen.

A PRAYER.

A PRAYER.

O GOD my Saviour, I beseech thee for thy tender mercies sake, let not the deceitfulness of riches, nor any of the things of the world get my affections, nor suffer thou my own desires and lusts to blind my eyes to the pleasures at thy right hand.

Be pleased to make me a stranger and pilgrim here, and let faith in thee be my riches, thy word my lanthorn and staff in this dark world; and let my unfeigned love to thee, and my continual thirst to be for ever in thy favour, make me think little of all carnal joys and happiness. In all company and in all places draw me after thee. Give me a sensible conviction of thy love to me, and the assurance that I am born again of thy Spirit, and made a child of God; and let me know that all my sins are forgiven and buried in thy wounds, and in the red sea of thy blood for ever.

I will be thine body and soul, O keep that which I entrust to thy care till the day of restitution, and in all dangers be near me. If I should be rash, or run in a way which is not right, or should mistake thy mind, disappoint and hinder me; but O let my soul be still precious in thy sight, till the appointed time is come for me to depart. Then, my dear Saviour, let the angels carry me to thy bosom, and without fear or dread in the assurance of faith, let me leave the world and come home to thee. Let this be my happy lot, and do what thou wilt with me here. Hear me, O thou good Shepherd of Israel, and grant my prayer for thy name's sake. Amen.

20 MA 59

F I N I S.

The Hidden Treasure.

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BEING THE
SUBSTANCE
OF A
DISCOURSE

DELIVERED AT

PHILBATCH on the MILFORD-
HAVEN in SOUTH-WALES,

In the YEAR 1753.

K
By JOHN CENNICK.

I counsel thee to buy of me Gold tried in the Fire,
that thou mayest be rich, Rev. iii. 18.

Riches and Honour are with me, yea durable Riches
and Righteousness. My Fruit is better than Gold,
yea than fine Gold, and my Revenue than choice
Silver, Prov. xviii. 19.

THE FIFTH EDITION.

L O N D O N :

Printed and sold by H. TRAPP, No. 1, Paternoster-
Row. 1791.



MATT. xiii. 44.

The kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; which, when a man hath found, he hideth; and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.

THOUGH our Lord, in the days of his flesh, was pleased to speak in parables, yet he delivers his doctrine in such a plain manner, uses such easy comparisons, and with such an inimitable simplicity, that the peasant and herdsman, the little child and servant-maid can be as capable of understanding and comprehending his mind, as the most learned and studious philosopher on earth.

He did it, out of his infinite wisdom, to destroy the wisdom of the wise; and to set at naught, and baffle, and bring to nothing, the understanding of the prudent.

He would not leave room for the wise man to glory in his wisdom before him; nor give an occasion for the ignorant to complain, because he had not the gift of knowledge, or sigh under the disadvantages of a slender education; for however a solid judgment, letters, study, books, and sciences, may be valuable in respect of other matters, they help

not often in the matter of salvation; nor have the most understanding and witty men been always best; but some, to their hurt, have found that true, "The world by wisdom knew not God." On the other hand, many unlearned persons, and men in other respects weak and unknowing, have found that wisdom which is from above, and been wise in the sight of God.

If the wise, the thinking, and studious would stoop to learn of Jesus, their knowledge in earthly things would not hinder them to be saved; but if they are resolved to judge of divine truths by their carnal reason, and to disbelieve and doubt of what surmounts their comprehension, and of all that is not according to the nature of things, they must be no Christians, but are in a fair way to plunge into the abyss of Atheism, and lose the real enjoyment of God their Saviour here and hereafter. So if the poor servant in the house, or the shepherd upon the mountains, is disposed for eternal life, his ignorance shall not prevent him to become a child of God. The Holy Spirit, and Jesus the true light, will teach him wisdom secretly, and make him experience and feel in his heart the inconceivable happiness of the saints, and joy unspeakable. He shall be well satisfied of his safe condition, and be inly assured he has a part in the kingdom of God in worlds to come.

To the insincere, whether wise or unwise, the gospel is a book closed; and when one gives it to the unlearned, and says, Read it, I pray thee; he says, I cannot do it, because I am unlearned: and when it is given to the learned, he answers, I cannot read it, for it is sealed. Hence it is that so many look upon the scriptures as a book of mysteries which very few understand, and the way to be saved a difficult and intricate matter, and so live willingly ignorant
of

of the things which make for their peace, and neglect so great salvation; but else the way to heaven is plainly marked out, and the direction of the Leader of the people is so written, that "he that runs may read, and a fool need not err in the highway of holiness."

As I said before, all the parables of our Saviour are legible, and plain, and simple; and whoever wants to understand, let him do as the disciples, who asked their Lord privately, and they shall be taught of God, and find rest to their souls.

The kingdom of God cannot be easily likened to things temporal, and this made our Saviour seem to be at a loss unto what to compare it; but then, in many respects, he has compared it to things common, because of the infirmity of our flesh. Who can truly describe light to one blind, or make the deaf know what are sounds? or who can make a natural man sensible of the spiritual life, of the manifesting of Christ within the heart, and of his kingdom, which is not of the world?

The beginning of Christianity is trusting Jesus; he has continually preached of the kingdom, and which he says is within you. His witnesses are without number, who have entered it and possessed it in the earth, and who have sealed it with their blood, and confirmed it in their last moments, that "the kingdom of God is come, and his tabernacle is with men." It is one while compared to a marriage which a king made for his son; another time to seed sown in a field; and at another time to a net cast into the sea, which gathered of every kind, bad and good; at another time to a man who let out his vineyard to husbandmen; at another time to a merchant seeking goodly pearls; and, in the text, to "treasure hid in a field."

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The whole gospel is full of these parables; for "without a parable Jesus spake not to the people." He did it that he might fulfil the prophets, "I have used similitudes." And again, "I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world." Thus he had done during the dispensation of the law, which, with all its ordinances and ceremonies, was dark and typical of the kingdom which was to come. When he spake to the fathers, before his coming in the flesh, he used this way, and gave them visions, dreams, and signs, by which he made known his will. The necessity of blood-shedding under the law was to signify, that "without shedding blood there was no remission:" the exhibiting the victims upon the altars, the lambs and calves, &c. were figures of that Lamb, who should be shewn upon the cross a spectacle to angels and men; and, after the same manner, all the doctrines and rites delivered by Moses, pointed out Jesus and the redemption. Hosea must take to him an adulteress, and marry her before the children of Israel, as a sign that the Lord was an husband to an adulterous people. Ezekiel must see a valley full of dry bones, whereby the Lord would express the state of his church; he must prophecy to them, and they lived; to signify that by his servant's ministry he would raise them up to a new life, and recover them, tho' now so dead and dry.

Again; he is taught by the similitude of a new-born infant cast out in the open field, in a deplorable and unpitied condition, the fall; and, by the Lord's passing by and seeing it in its blood, and saying to it, Live, entering into a covenant with it, swearing to it, &c. cloathing, washing, and adorning it with fine linen and gold, the free salvation is meant, and the happy and good estate we are brought into by means

means of the New Testament, which our Saviour has made with us and confirmed by an oath.

Jeremiah, by seeing the potter work, understood how all were made at first by the good Creator; and, when marred or broken, he saw how he did not cast the vessel away, but made it new, a vessel that pleased him; namely, that though the world was now like a broken and marred vessel, it was yet in a merciful Creator's hands, who would renew it in righteousness, and be their Saviour.

Daniel must see visions of the captivity, and of the Messiah; and in this way generally the Lord spake to the prophets. Nor did this way of communicating the divine will cease, till by the death of the Lord the veil was rent in two, and a new and living way opened into the holy place. From which time all the apostles and ministers of Jesus Christ have used great plainness of speech, and not done as Moses. They declare openly, Jesus is the Lord; and that forgiveness of sins, repentance, and the gift of the Holy Ghost, are received freely by all who believe in his name.

In my discourse therefore I would willingly open this parable of the treasure; and as I have just mentioned a few of the figurative visions and signs of the prophets before the incarnation of Christ, so it may not be amiss to do the same in respect of some of the many parables which are in the gospel, and even in that chapter out of which I have taken the text, because it may help to give a light into others of the same nature.

When the kingdom is compared to the marriage of the king's son, it respects that marriage of the Lamb mentioned in the Revelations, and in other parts of the scripture. The King is the Father of our Lord Christ the King of kings; the Son is the Lamb,

Lamb, who will take his bride out of the earth, and invites all to this wedding; the supper is already prepared; the bride, his elect, is chosen and making herself ready; her garments are the Lord's righteousness, her crown his glory; the servants sent out are ministers, who first preached to the Jews, but they made their excuses, and now are they sent to all Gentiles, and to the ends of the earth, to call good and bad to the wedding, or to invite every creature to the salvation. The King waits till all are in. On the last day he will see the guests. Woe be to such as have not on the wedding garment, for they may not sit down at his table. These are such as ventured into eternity, without being arrayed in the white linen of the righteousness of Jesus. In that day the trumpet shall blow, "The marriage of the Lamb is come!" and all who have virgin hearts, and are devoted to the Redeemer, whose lusts have been here washed away, and their raiment kept white; whose hearts, like a lamp, have burned with pure love; who have had Jesu's love within, like a stock of oil, to keep it from going out, who have left the world and gone out to meet the Bridegroom, these shall enter with him into his chamber, and follow him whithersoever he goeth. Others, who have expected his coming, and made profession of his name, but were foolish, slept in an insecure state, without their election insured, these are the foolish virgins, who too late pray, "Lord, Lord, open to us; who must hear him say, "Depart from me, I never knew you."

When the kingdom is compared to seed which was sown in the field, which sprung up one knows not how, first the blade, then the ear, then the ripe corn, when the husbandman orders the servants to put in the sickle and gather it, because the harvest is come, our Saviour would have us to understand, that
after

after the sowing-time is over, the husbandman leaves all to the sun and to the early and latter rain to bring it forth, and understands not how the seed is nourished and brought forth, but waits for the time to reap with joy. Just so, when the Son of man sows the word of life in the heart, he first breaks it like a husbandman, he defends it from harm, and keeps off the birds of prey, which are the devils, until his seed has taken root and springs up. A soul is sensible of its divine life, and of the work of our Saviour, but cannot describe to another, how his seed thrives and his husbandry prospers; it is so, and they are happy. They perceive, as it were, first the blade, the dawns of grace, the tender stirrings of the love of God, and are glad; and as they grow ripe, like, as corn, the more ripe it is, the more it bows down, 'till the reaper comes and takes it into the barn; so a true Christian, the more he knows of Jesus, the more he experiences of his grace and mercy, and ripens for glory, the more he bows down, and with humility and shame confesses his own unworthiness, and adores the free grace of God his Saviour. Thus it is till he is called away, and brought home to the store-house above, like a flock of corn fully ripe; then all danger of birds devouring the seed is over, all fear of a blasting wind is removed, and every care ceases for ever.

When the kingdom is likened another time to seed sown in the field, it is after this manner: "A certain man sowed good seed, and, while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares," i. e. darnel*. When the wheat sprung up, the tares came up also; and the servants told their lord, and would have rooted them up, and weeded them out directly; but lest they should weed up the tender grain with them,

* It is a weed much like corn; but has an insatiating, stupefying quality, and of great hurt to the crop.

bid them let them both grow together ; and in the harvest he made them gather the wheat into his garner, but burnt the tares in bundles.

This in a great measure our Saviour has explained ; the sower is himself, the field the world, the good seed are the children of God, the tares the children of satan. Whenever he gathers him a little flock of children ; while his servants, the ministers, forget they are watchmen, and sleep, satan sows among them hypocrites and wicked people ; so that few, if any, congregations have continued always free from false brethren. Thus among the twelve was a Judas, among the disciples afterwards a Simon Magus, and Judaizing preachers who trouble the churches, and others, who, by their wicked lives, were enemies to the cross of Christ. The holy angels would willingly root such out of the world by sudden deaths and by judgments, as in the former times ; but, lest that severity should frighten a tender child, a young believer, and make him lose his confidence in his Lord, Jesus is pleased both shall grow together. He knows it is his enemy's work ; that from the beginning he has done so ; but when the last day comes, he will take the tares in bundles and burn them, the whoremongers in their bundle, the drunkards in a heap together, the covetous and avaricious men in their company ; but the wheat, his own dear children, he will bring safe with him into heaven.

When the kingdom is compared to a net cast into the sea, it is unfolded thus : the sea is the world, the fishermen the ministers of Christ, the net is the gospel. When they preach the gospel to every creature, good and bad flock together, and are taken with the good news ; but, when all is brought to shore, some are found unfit for use, while others are preserved in little companies, as in in vessels, till they are brought home

home to God. Some the fishermen throw back into the sea as too small, and these may be taken again when they are fit for use. Some go back into the world, and perhaps are called another time, when they are thoroughly tired and sick of their sins, and the service of satan, and are saved; but who is cast away at the day of judgment, he perishes, tho' caught in the same net with others, who are found precious in the eyes of the Lord. In that day "two may be in one bed, the one shall be taken and the other left; two women may be in the field together or grinding at the same mill, when one is taken and the other is left."

In the parable of the vineyard, which was let out to husbandmen, our Saviour treats chiefly of the Jewish priests and rulers, to whom he had committed his word and law. The prophets were the servants who came to ask the fruit, and to exhort them to a life becoming a church and family of God; these they stoned, killed, and persecuted, till God sent his Son, and then satan inspired them with double cruelty; they thought if he were killed, they should have no trouble more in Israel, but go on in peace. Satan, who set them on, also thought, if I could but overcome him, whom he knew to be heir of all, he should then have the whole world in his hands. The driving out of these husbandmen, and letting out the vineyard to others, signified the rejecting the Jews, and giving the gospel to the Gentiles: but this parable is also levelled against all persecuting spirits and people, who, as soon as they lose the treasure of faith and the presence of the shekinah, and persecute the messengers and witnesses of the Redeemer, are rejected; the ark is removed, the candlestick brought out from among them, and given to a people who shall render the fruit to the Lord in due season.

In the parable of calling and hiring servants into the vineyard, much is included; the vineyard is the church, so Isaiah had preached long ago; the Lord the Holy Spirit calls men into it; some are called in their childhood and youth, and some upon their death-beds, and when their hair is grey with age. Very often the old sinner is paid first, i. e. taken first into the kingdom of heaven; and such as the penitent thief snatched from the gates of hell, as it were, and carried joyfully to the throne, while others, that were first called, continue labouring in the world, bearing the heat of persecution, and enduring all hardships, and these sometimes are tempted to murmur; with these our Saviour expostulates, and asks, "Is thy eye evil, because mine is good? or cannot I do what I will with my own?" As if he would say, Cannot I take a wretch from the jaws of death and save him, and might not I send the self-righteous away empty? Grace and heaven are my own, and I bestow them where I will, out of mere compassion and pity, and not because any have deserved it from me. This parable is to set forth the sovereignty of our God, and to justify his saving publicans and harlots, and calling into his fold the chief of sinners, as well as such who have been early serious and religious, and called in the first hours of the day. It was designed to suppress the Jewish risings and murmurings, as if the ways of the Lord were not equal, and to silence its self-righteous reasonings.

There is yet another parable, of a merchant's seeking costly pearls; who, having found one of great value, went and sold all he had to purchase it. The merchant is a soul athirst for salvation, and who is like a merchant traversing sea and land to find it, who having found Jesus, the most costly pearl, parts with all he has, and counts all dross and dung that he

he may inherit this Pearl. What he before esteemed precious, or served him instead of holiness, he undervalues; and whatever before he counted riches, wisdom, good deeds, gifts, graces, and qualities, esteems nothing now but this jewel, this elect precious stone; and is richer in the possessing him, than if he had all heaven and earth without him.

But the parable of which I shall treat chiefly, is of treasure hid in a field. Should a person pass through your country, and pointing to a field, assure the inhabitants and neighbours that there was much money buried there; as many as were incredulous would smile at the report, and mock those who would credit and go about to dig for it; they themselves would not search for it, because they could not believe it was there; nor could they help despising such as did, for the same reason. But if some believed the news, they would go and dig and search for the treasure, till they had found it; and, having secured it, would naturally part with all they had, to buy that field.

Thus it is when the kingdom of God is preached in a land; salvation, and the love of our Saviour, pardon of sins and our Lord's presence, is declared to be found in this life, and in our mortal state; Jesus is himself manifested and known; he comes and brings with him his Father, and dwells with us; his reward also is with him; his righteousness and merits, his redemption and kingdom are revealed at his appearing.

This is a treasure indeed! and this is that treasure spoken of in the parable, which is more precious than the gold of Ophir, but it is hid; it is in the world, but yet invisible, as all the great things of our Saviour are: his kingdom is not of the world, yet it is there, and, as himself expresses it, it is within you, it is not far from hence. His wisdom is understood secretly; the manna that he promises, is hidden manna; his
 leaven

heaven is hid in the meal. It is therefore well called the secret of the Lord, hidden wisdom, peace which the world cannot give, joy which a stranger intermeddleth not with, happiness which no eye hath seen, nor ear heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man to conceive rightly of it, till inspired from the Lamb, or till it is revealed by the Spirit.

Our Saviour's kingdom is come, and many press into it; but some, when they hear of this treasure, despise it; they believe no such is found in this world; they think no such happiness is attainable in this life; and therefore they neither seek it, or ask it, but are like people who hear of treasure hid in a field; but esteem it a dream, or fancy, or cheat, and so never seek for it; so all, who do not believe the kingdom attainable now, cannot possibly enter it, because of unbelief. They cannot seek it, because they do not believe it is to be found; they cannot ask for the knowledge of salvation by the forgiveness of sins, because they think it is not got till we die; they do not seek the Lord; for they believe, to expect to receive the Holy Ghost, and know our Saviour, is presumption. Thus pure unbelief hinders them to enter into the rest remaining for the people of God. But why do not they believe? Is it because the Lord has promised no such blessing? No; he has promised it. All the scriptures are filled with promises of this kind. All was written that we might believe in Jesus, and have eternal life through his name.

Is it then because none have found this treasure? By no means; for in all places there are witnesses of it, among all sorts of people there are men who have found the Beloved, who know their Redeemer lives, and who have got salvation in his blood, even remission of their sins. But the truth is, they neither believe Jesus nor his disciples, they put it off and say,
What

What is in the scripture concerns the apostles and first ages of the church, and as violently oppose the continuation of those blessings, as if no bible was in the world. Let such take care lest that happen to them which is written in the prophets, "Behold I work a work in your days, which ye will not believe, though a man declare it unto you."

It is otherwise with some; for they hear of this hidden treasure, and they seek it till they have found it. If any should look for other treasure, a great part of them might look in vain, and perhaps after many days and weeks labour another may find it, and all their toil be fruitless and lost; but it is so ordered by him who has hid this treasure, that all who seek shall find, all that ask shall have, and all who run in this race shall win the prize.

This treasure is found in Jesus; in him are hid all the treasures of God. Whoever wants to be rich in eternity, must have him. He is the costly Pearl, the Pearl of great price. He is that true Treasure, "which no moth or rust can corrupt, and which no thief can break through and steal." Ye dead souls, who are minded to find this true and real Treasure, this solid and lasting riches, come to Jesus, and you shall find it there.

Be not faithless, but believe Jesus Christ's kingdom is yet to be found; his salvation is yet to be experienced; his love is yet to be felt in the heart. Up and seek it; be in earnest about it; remember "the kingdom of God suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force." Whoso seeks with all his heart, shall find it, and then he will readily part with all he has, to purchase that field; he will count all other things, all gain, company, pleasures, honours, beauty, friends, and whatever else he valued before, spiritual or temporal, as loss, that he may get and win.

win Jesus; nor need he be afraid of others getting his riches, and so must hide it, there is enough for all; and therefore when a soul has found Christ, he is like the woman of Samaria, Philip, and others, he would call and invite every man to come and see Jesus too: he is happy he is in the kingdom, and wants all, even his enemies, to come into the same.

My brethren, be thus minded; let all your business, your religion, your endeavours and aim be, to know and have Jesus Christ. Let this be the mark of the prize of your high calling. Value nothing beside, love nothing, count nothing riches or treasure, desire nothing, ask nothing but to have him and his merits, and then you will be rich, the kingdom of heaven shall be yours, the life that now is, and that which is to come, all shall be yours for ever and ever.

While others despise so inestimable a benefit, disbelieve and scorn it, and mock and deride the sincere few, who are digging after this treasure, and in search after this riches and kingdom, continue ye in faith. Let our Saviour's promise be steadily believed, and think not well of yourselves till ye have entered the possession of this grace, so shall ye be happy here and hereafter. Here ye shall be kings over satan and the world, and foretaste and anticipate your heaven, and no man shall be able to rob you of your crown; you shall have your portion safe when the heavens vanish away, and when the earth is burnt up; you shall then be in a continuing city, in a kingdom that cannot be shaken, world without end. Amen.

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F I N I S.

The Offices of the Messiah.

BEING THE
SUBSTANCE
OF A
DISCOURSE

DELIVERED IN
Haverford-West, in South-Wales,

In the YEAR 1753.

By JOHN CENNICK.

Consider the Apostle and High-Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus. Heb. iii. 1.

God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power, who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil. Acts x. 38.

He preached the kingdom of God; for therefore was he sent. Luke iv. 43.

THE FIFTH EDITION.

LONDON:

Printed and sold by H. TRAPP, No. 1, Paternoster-Row. 1789.

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THE FIFTH EDITION

J O N D C R

The Offices of the Messiah.

LUKE IV. 18, 19.

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor, he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord.

THIS was that portion of scripture our Saviour chose for his text when he preached at Nazareth on a certain sabbath-day, not long after his baptism in Jordan; and when he had read it in the synagogue he closed the book and sat down, and said, "This day is the scripture fulfilled in your ears," and all wondered at the gracious words which he spake, and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fastened on him; but before he had done speaking, his own doctrine was verified in himself, namely, "that a prophet is not without honour but in his own country, and among his own kindred;" for they were offended with his doctrine, and thrust him out of their synagogue, and attempted to kill him, but he escaped through the midst of them, and went away.

I shall not now make observations on what offended the Nazarenes in our Lord's discourse, nor speak of his early persecutions, and how he used his divine power in disappearing from among them that sought

to destroy him, for this would take up that time which I would rather spend in treating of his blessed offices in the world. This shall always be to me a favourite subject, as long as I am his servant, and permitted to labour in his vineyard.

It is certain, Isaiah, out of whose prophecy Jesus read, spake those things not of himself but of the Redeemer, since he has appropriated them to himself, and which things are the testimony of all the inspired writers concerning him.

Our Saviour would read in the scripture, to teach us they were the true sayings of God, and that we might not be tempted to despise or slight the law and the prophets. He often mentions passages out of the Bible himself, and bid such as wanted to be satisfied concerning him, search the scriptures, confessing at the same time, "these are they that testify of me." He also blames the Sadducees, because they were ignorant of the scriptures, and urges no greater reason in his answers to the tempter than that it was written. He was, no doubt, the God of wisdom, and could easily have baffled satan with the strongest arguments, but he chose only to say, it is written, and referred to the holy writings, as to the words of God; nor could the enemy, with all his temptations, stand against the simplicity of our Saviour. In this respect he has left us an example that we should follow his footsteps, when satan or carnal men would reason with us. If they would oppose the Godhead of our Saviour, our answer must be, How readeest thou? It is written, "He is over all God blessed for evermore." Or should they despise free justification, the gift of the Spirit, the knowledge of our salvation, the assurance of faith, Christ's dwelling in us and manifesting himself to us, we must appeal to the scriptures, for so it is written: and when meek arguments

arguments from the oracles of God and our Saviour's own words are not likely to prevail, we may not use other wisdom, or hope to succeed by any other weapon; this is the sword of the Spirit, and "if men hear not Moses and the prophets, neither would they be persuaded though one rose from the dead."

Christians are persons who have received Jesus Christ for their God, and are called by his name in the world; his word decides all controversies with them, and is believed, though it contradicts the maxims of the philosophers, and opposes the sciences of the schools; and therefore his disciples, the true christians in all ages and countries, think not, if such doctrines are probable? or if that declaration of Jesus, or this promise can be possible? but simply and implicitly they believe him in all things, and judge not after the sight of their eyes, or after the hearing of their ears, but follow his word through thick and thin, through evil report and good report, and venture all they have eternally upon his word. In this matter our Saviour proves and tries his children, for none of his doctrines are of the world, nor were calculated to please men. But some point blank oppose the common received opinions of men, and are only possible with God; such are the doctrines of his divinity, and having the whole fulness of the Godhead in him bodily, his incarnation and being born of a virgin, his miracles in general, his death, his resurrection, his meeting his disciples, and standing personally and bodily among them, when the doors were shut for fear of the Jews, his ascension in a cloud into heaven, and his making himself known to and dwelling with us.

But though our Saviour's doctrines do so far surpass natural conceptions, and transcend all human reason and knowledge, yet has he not left his children

dren without the happiest and most solid certainty of truth; for whoever believes his doctrine shall know if it be of God, and shall have the witness in himself, the Holy Spirit confirms our faith and makes our hearts "rejoice in believing with joy unspeakable and full of glory;" we anticipate our heaven here, and have here the evidence of things unseen.

It is well, for other reasons, that we have the scriptures, for else long ago the doctrines there taught had been lost in whole countries, and the heathenish religion of nature had usurped the place; so that if men enlightened from heaven should have come and preached, even in such an age as ours, the forgiveness of sins through faith, and the comfortable doctrine of the Holy Ghost's inspiration, the men of this generation would have been ready to condemn such preachers, and think, Ye bring strange things to our ears; and should they venture to say, "We are witnesses of these things," we have got pardon of our sins, and have found Jesus and eternal life, they would be ready to stone them for blasphemy and presumption. But now the scriptures are in the world, the ambassadors of the Lord may appeal to them cheerfully, and there prove to all men, that so the apostles and prophets believed and taught, and so it is written, and this is their spiritual weapon in the midst of an adulterous and gainsaying people. It is an unspeakable mercy we have the scriptures, and I blame such exceedingly who take away that key of knowledge from the people. It is a needless fear that ignorant and unlearned men and women would misconstrue it, and begin sects and create schisms in the church; such have not done it, but the subtle and wise scholars, the learned, and such as have atheistically scorned to believe in Jesus, and who have preferred human wisdom

wisdom too much, and neglected the teaching of the Holy Spirit; these have made the breaches, and been the authors of the dangerous sects; these have rushed into ruin, and drawn disciples after them; and therefore only because the word of God was not their lanthorn, nor a light to their feet, but they chose another way.

Ye know, my dear brethren, how many promises are made to those who keep our Saviour's words, "they shall not taste of death, and he will keep them in the day which shall try all them that dwell upon the earth;" therefore, and because our Saviour so read and spake out of the scriptures, let us prize them, and be deaf as the deaf adder to all doctrines that glorify not our Lord Christ, and which are not written, nor have the foundation in the scriptures of truth. Let us rest upon their veracity till Jesus comes, who will not suffer "one jot or tittle to pass away till all is fulfilled."

So much seemed needful to say on this head; I will now proceed to speak of the text in order.

It begins, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me." All the children of God have of the spirit in measure, but Jesus had it without measure, even in his manhood, of which it is here spoken, the Holy Ghost in fulness descended and rested upon the holy Child Jesus, and qualified him for his great work. In his human nature he was weak, and weaker than any man, he being only the seed of a woman, and in his flesh he was capable of suffering, being tempted, grieved, and as liable to all weaknesses and hindrances as we are: "He was like us in all things, sin only excepted," therefore was he anointed with the fulness of the Spirit to be the Prophet, King, and Priest of his people. Hence he is called, "The Christ, the Messiah, the Lord's Anointed;" for in respect
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of his humbling himself and taking the place of Mediator, being a man, and putting himself in the place of Adam, he was lower than the Father, and indeed a little lower than the angels, the minister and servant of all, whose office and service was to restore fallen mankind, to do God's work, heal the breach sin had made, and set to rights the ruined creation, washing and saving the souls in his blood, and bringing to them salvation. For this his dear Father spared and sent him, and for this he meekly and willingly came into the world; this the lowly and gracious Lamb confesses when he says, "He hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor;" it was the principal end of his humiliation to let the poor know that there was mercy for them. He was made man and anointed for this embassy; it was the glorious errand he had in the world, the chief message he had to bring from the throne of his Father, and from the sacred Trinity, that the Holy One from on high had beheld their poverty, and sent them redemption, that they were beloved in heaven, and that God who made them, and from whom they had wandered and gone astray, had seen [their affliction and was come down to deliver them. This was the glad tidings the servant of the Lord brought to his perishing world, and for this he, who was God from everlasting, and the Creator and Maker of all, when he had contrived the amazing scheme, and the due time was commenced, bowed the heavens and was incarnate, stooped to carry the news himself, as well as to pay the ransom of his enslaved and captive creatures, and willingly offered himself to take the servant's place, saying, "In the body that thou hast prepared me, lo! I come to do thy will, O God."

Daniel.

Daniel foresaw who the Messiah should be, and what person should be the finisher of iniquity, transgression, and sin, and who should make reconciliation by being cut off and slain, and bring in everlasting righteousness, and therefore speaks of anointing the Most Holy.

None of the angels might announce the counsel of Jehovah in this matter till the Prince of their hosts appeared in the flesh, and to the poor was the gospel first to be preached. The poor are the miserable part of mankind, the friendless, the dejected, the helpless, such as are apprized of their lost estate, and who are unhappy, who cannot take up with the world, or be satisfied with their good things, but who sigh and mourn in secret, who know and feel their impotency, sin and unworthiness, and who do not know how to be saved out of their danger; their thoughts are "of all men I am the most miserable." These first and more immediately are the objects of the Lord's charity, and though all are poor but insensible of it, yet these are sensible of it, and their extremity and poverty has been the cause of Christ Jesus's coming to help them. They are the highly favored of the Lord, and must hear how dear they are to him that made them, and what his designs are concerning them, namely, to love them with everlasting love, and to enrich them with the kingdom of heaven, and make them possessors of the world to come. This is easily observed throughout the scriptures, as well in our Saviour's sermon upon the mount as in the course of all his preaching, that the poor have the gospel preached to them. And to the poor in spirit, the spiritually poor, how glad news is this! To such as were in a low estate, and who were little, and base, and contemptible in their own eyes, and who were ready to conclude that they were

forsaken and justly abandoned by the Lord, and unworthy his notice or regard because of their sin, how sweet must the gospel sound when it is published before them, that such may be saved, that the Lord has opened a well of salvation for such to wash in and be clean, that a righteousness is prepared and finished to dress and cloath them for the wedding of the Lamb, and that Jesus had undertook for them, had paid their ransom price, and had forgiven their debt and disobedience, and was now their Saviour! This must revive their sinking spirits, and make their heavy and discouraged hearts rejoice, just as good old Jacob's heart revived when he looked out of his tent, and saw indeed the chariots and waggons Joseph had sent out of Egypt to fetch him; O, he said, "It is true! Joseph is yet alive, I will go and see him before I die;" so when the report of the gospel is brought with power to the ears, and when Jesus himself speaks to the heart, and brings it out to see what he has done for sinners, and how he has prepared a salvation for them, when he embraces the soul and kisses it, and his soft still voice whispers peace and inspires faith, though small as a grain of mustard-seed, they revive, they receive the welcome message, and become the happiest of all creatures. As Zaccheus, the chief of the publicans in Jericho, received him joyfully, so do they, and no condemned criminal who stands ready to be executed, with the halter about his neck, so rejoices to receive the king's pardon, no prisoner is so glad to be released from his cell, no slave is so transported to be ransomed, as a poor sinner to have Jesus preach the gospel to his heart, and assure him of his favor. This is Jesu's work and office, this he must do himself, and though he sends out messengers with the same good news, they are like his fishermen, when they toiled all night but

took

took nothing without him. It is his voice that goes to the heart; he is the only Preacher of everlasting life in the strictest sense, and he was anointed to preach the gospel to the poor.

Another of his offices is to heal the broken-hearted. The prophets who saw his day afar off, had called him the Healer, and said he should rise with healing under his wings, and this he preaches himself.

His great intention is to create the world, the heavens and earth anew, to restore the decayed places, and build up what is fallen down; but especially he has compassion upon the broken-hearted, and must heal them, for therefore was he sent. When he came to Bethany and saw the grief and tears of Mary and Martha, he was so touched that before all he wept too, and rather than see them bear their cutting affliction, Jesus called back their brother and comforted them. Thus he did when, as he was entering into the city of Nain, he met the corpse of a young man, the only son of his mother, who was a widow, and weeping bitterly for her child. The woman was distressed, and her heart broken with grief at the loss of her only son; her soul refused comfort. I suppose she wished often as David once did for Absalom, "Would to God I had died for thee, my son!" She might think, I am a poor disconsolate and desolate widow, I had but one to comfort me, and he is removed, I have none left to care for me, or to be a comforter to me in my old years. O call my name Marah, for the Lord has dealt bitterly by me, he has taken away all I had, and will bring down my grey hairs with sorrow to the grave. Thus mourned the childless mother till she approached the grave, where Jesus met her. O how was his heart affected, his tender mercies could not let him suffer it, he ordered the men that carried the

bier to stand still, and said to the poor woman, "Weep not;" as if he would have said, O, dear woman, I cannot bear thy grief, I know sin has been the cause of all this; there had been no sorrow, nor crying, nor death, had not sin entered into the world, but I am come down to end it, I am sent to heal the broken-hearted, weep not, I will restore thee thy son; and he called him from the dead, and gave him to his mother. If our Saviour could be so deeply affected in such cases, and pitied the over-grieved children of men when their loss was natural, how much more, think ye, must he pity souls whose grief is intolerable about their sin, and who are broken-hearted about their future state? He knows what terrors can oppress a human creature, he has been a man, and has experienced it often, and thoroughly in the wilderness, and that night especially when he was in such distress and anguish that he sunk down and trembled, walked to and fro in the garden, and sweat blood, being in an agony, and when he cried out, "My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me!" His pangs and sorrows cure us, and "by his stripes we are healed." When he lays his bleeding hand upon the heart and says, Peace, be still, all is healed, and the hurt and pain removed. Remember this when ye are troubled, and ye who know what a broken and contrite heart is, for he will not despise it; offer it to him for a sacrifice and he will help you, and be assured he was sent to heal the broken-hearted.

Another part of our Saviour's office was to preach deliverance to the captives. He knew all were sold and carried away captive by the enemy; all were his bond-servants, and properly slaves to satan and to sin. The bondage in Egypt was but a type of our spiritual captivity, he therefore came to open the prison

prison doors, and to break in pieces the fetters of iron and brass; but this he would do in equity and justice, therefore he became our ransom-price, and was given for us; his own blood was shed to buy us out of the enemy's hand, and by bearing our sins and punishments he merited our freedom. He only has the power to bring a soul out of the house of bondage, and deliver him into the glorious liberty of the children of God, and make him free indeed. No sin can rule any longer when Jesus has made him free: satan no longer can lead them captive at his will when our Saviour has commanded, "Let my people go that they may serve me."

It is a false doctrine that we are bound to sin as long as we live, and must sometimes serve the old master; this is establishing iniquity by a law; but if a man had been wholly led and captivated by lust, or drink, or passion, or covetousness, or the world, or by any other vice, let him apply to the Deliverer and he shall be set at liberty. Our Lord's hands that were once bound with chains and nailed upon the cross for him, shall unbind him and dissolve his bonds, though he had made a league with hell, and a covenant with death, it should not stand; let him call upon the name of the Lord, and he shall be saved. He brings the prisoner out of the prison-house, and no sin, no inbred villainy and wickedness, no guilt, no bonds of satan can detain a soul one moment longer when they believe in Jesus. All lose their power and become like tow that has touched the fire. Before the word of Christ all the strongholds of satan tremble, and every one's bands are loosed. This every believer has experienced; they know what slavery they were once in, how unhappy they were under the dominion of sin, till the mighty God, who made war with satan and overcame,
preached

preached deliverance to them, and assured their hearts he had paid their ransom, and was now their Redeemer. No one has a right to free debtors but the creditor, and he who pays all for them, nor may any man deliver the slaves from the galleys or plantations, or place of slavery, but he that bought them. In this respect therefore has our Lord Jesus the pre-eminence, for he is Lord of all in heaven, and earth, and hell, and can free whom he will. He is the only creditor, against him only have we sinned, and he only can frankly forgive us, and acquit and release us; but this he is more ready to do than we to ask it. It is his office, his work, and delight to preach deliverance to the captives, and to set them at liberty. If therefore any are oppressed of the devil, or find themselves chained and bound by sin, turn to him as prisoners of hope, look to him and be saved.

Another part of our Saviour's work was to recover sight to the blind. All our stupidity and ignorance in divine matters is called and esteemed blindness in the scripture. The god of this world has blinded all, and with all propriety may it be said, we were born blind. The blind person is not more at a loss to know what light is, or to distinguish colours, than a natural man is to understand our Saviour and see his salvation. This is a hard doctrine to some, and especially to such as are knowing and gifted men, who have a philosophical genius, and also to religious persons who know the letter of the law of God, can distinguish between sound and unsound preaching, have adhered to the best church, and professed the best and most orthodox system of faith and religion. To tell these of their being blind would offend them as much as when our Saviour once told it to the strict Jew, who angrily asked him, Are we blind also? Our Saviour answered, "If ye were blind ye should

should have no sin, but because ye say, we see, therefore your sin remaineth. For judgment I am come into the world, that they who see not might see, and those that see might be made blind;" that is, Jesus was come to open the eyes of the blind, and to enlighten those that had sat in darkness and in the shadow of death, and to remove the scales from their eyes, as he did by St. Paul, that they might see God and his salvation. But it is a melancholy thing when people suppose they know enough, and can see already, and are yet strangers to our Saviour, and whose eyes were never anointed with his eye-salve, neither did they ever come to him to receive their sight. These are those who love darkness, and are of the Laodicean stamp and spirit, who boasted that they had need of nothing, and knew not that they were poor, and miserable, and blind. Such who proudly stand it out, and will have no other illumination but nature, no light but reason, receive no benefit by the gospel; Christ, the light of the world, is of no service to them, they are only the more blind, and all their wisdom becomes a curse and a snare to them, and their brightest counsels are, like the counsel of Ahitophel, foolishness.

I believe all the gracious acts of our Lord, in respect of his curing so many blind people in the days of his flesh, were written not only as a history of his deeds and miracles, but that souls, sensible of their blindness and darkness, might apply to him and be enlightened. Let them then who are spiritually blind tread in the steps of Bartimeus, and others, let them sit in the way begging, and though they should be persuaded and charged by their prudent friends, who are afraid of their being righteous over-much, to hold their peace, and not make so much ado, yet let them cry so much the more, "Lord Jesus! thou Son

Son of David have mercy upon me." See only the astonishing effect Bartimeus's prayers had upon the Lord; he stood still; he could not proceed on his journey till he had helped him, he called him to him, and asked him, "What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?" and he answered, "Lord, that I might receive my sight; and Jesus said, receive thy sight, thy faith hath saved thee, and he received his sight and followed Jesus in the way." If you wish, O that I knew the road in which Jesus would go, or could be so happy as Bartimeus, to know the place where he would pass by, I would beg like him, and not cease till I had prevailed; then know, as surely as Jesus passed along the road to Jericho, so surely is he present where two or three are met in his name; go and sit with them, and be assured Jesus passes by: If you cannot see him, he sees you, and has compassion on you. Speak to him and beg of him, as a beggar intreats for an alms; let neither friends nor foes prevent you to cry to him, till he has said to you, "Receive your sight, your faith has made you whole." Thus has our Saviour done to many thousands, and is come into the world on that errand, to preach recovering of sight to the blind. He only said in the beginning of the creation, "Let there be light, and there was light," the same said only to the blind eyes Ephatha, and immediately they saw; let him only speak the word and you shall no longer walk in darkness, but have the light of life. Many of those who were healed by our Saviour could not relate distinctly how Jesus did the miracle, and neither did he work the same by all, but spat upon the ground and anointed one man's eyes, touched another's, and only spake to a third; but this all could say, "One thing I know, that whereas I was blind now I see." So some who have been converted and brought into
marvellous

marvellous light by the divine Occulift, and whose blind eyes his tender mercy has opened, cannot always relate the direct manner of his Dealings with them, or tell as others, step by step, all his gracious proceedings with them, but this all can affirm, "I know I was blind, I know I was in darkness, and walked in darkness once, I did not know whether I was going to heaven or hell, I was blind to my part and interest in the Lamb, I did not see him, I did not look upon him, I was blind, but now I see; I see Jesus, I see the things that make for my peace, mine eyes have seen the Lord's salvation; he has recovered my sight, and I walk no longer in the cloud and in darkness, I know whither I am going, I am a child of light and of the day, the Sun of righteousness is risen upon me, the Lord himself is my light and my salvation, he is my sun by day, and my moon by night, and my light shall go down no more; God, my own God and Saviour, the Sun that went down in clouds and blood upon the mount Golgotha, is my light, and his countenance, once covered with shame and spittle, is my everlasting brightness."

Yet another office of our Saviour was to set at liberty them that were bruised. This is to release souls buffeted and hurried by satan, to extricate the tempted, and such as are continually unsettled and unsafe through the persecution and envy of the serpent. There are some souls of whom it may be said properly, they are bruised; they are sore with trials, and surrounded with numberless temptations, but they have a Friend who was tempted in all points like them, who will preach deliverance to them, and set them at liberty, so that the enemy shall not approach to touch them and to do them violence no more; these have been like sheep driven from the fold, and worried up and down in the wilderness by beasts

of prey, but Jesus is their good Shepherd, he says, "I will go after that which is driven away, I will bind up that which is torn, and heal that which is sick, and I will bring them back and feed them in good pasture." There are some in the world pitiable indeed, sore and bruised above measure, but to none is our Saviour more nigh and tender than to these; he pities them, and will surely lead them safe out of all temptations, and be their Saviour out of all their troubles; he will comfort all that mourn, they shall sooner or later find him wipe away the tears from their eyes, and leave no cause to complain or sigh any more for ever. Are ye bruised? tarry the Lord's leisure, be strong and he shall comfort your heart; only put your trust in the Lord; though you sow in tears you shall reap in joy, and though heaviness may endure for a night, joy shall come in the morning; though you pass through the fire, and go through deep waters that rage and swell against you, remember who has said, "Ye shall not be burnt, neither shall the waters swallow you up;" he will say one day to you, "Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations, I also have appointed you to sit down with me in my kingdom; come in ye weary and heavy laden souls, enter the joy of your Lord!"

There is yet another office of our Saviour to be treated of, and that is, to publish the acceptable year of the Lord. There is a day of grace, and an accepted time in which God is found, and wherein salvation is tendered and offered, so long the door of the wedding chamber is open, so long the trumpet of jubilee sounds, and it is possible to let this season of mercy slip and pass over. This was the case of the Israelites of old, "Forty years long was God grieved with them," and when they always erred in their hearts, and gave no credence to his word, after he had
said,

said, "To-day if ye will hear my voice; he sware that they should not enter into his rest." They were more thoughtful about the onions and garlick of Egypt, than to get the vineyards and olive-yards of Canaan, they longed more to go back and get the flesh-pots and herbs of the heathen, than the land flowing with milk and honey, wherefore God gave them up to their lusts, and they perished in the wilderness. Thus now many look after the pleasures and vanities of the present life, and despise the pleasures at God's right hand; they are eager and athirst for the things of this world, to redeem them from which it has cost the Lord so dearly, and the true land of Canaan, the glory of all lands, they slight; all his tender calls are of little weight to them, the price with which they were ransomed and bought is slighted, and they let the day of jubilee pass over, and so fall into the sad estate of Jerusalem, over which our Saviour weeping said, "O that thou hadst known in this thy day the things that make for thy peace, but now they are hid from thine eyes."

On the other hand, many embrace the gracious opportunity, and while it is called to-day lay hold on everlasting life. It is our Saviour who has the honour to let the soul hear, "Now is the acceptable time, now is the day of salvation!" O that he would preach it to all here, and give you chearfully and joyfully to betake yourselves now to the sanctuary and hiding place of his wounds, that when the night comes, when no man can work, ye may be safe in the refuge, and accepted for sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty.

The day and year of grace is now come, the gospel is now preached, salvation is now set before you, all things are ready, let your hearts also be ready, and enter in by Jesus, so shall ye experience all his
tender

tender mercies and loving kindness. Let your eyes be fastened on him, and your ears attend to the gracious words that proceed out of his mouth, hear all he says, and abide with him; let him be your friend and Saviour, let him be the riches of your poor souls, and preach deliverance to you in your captivity, let him open your eyes and anoint them with his tears and blood, it is the best eye-salve, let him heal your broken hearts, and comfort you in all afflicting times. Get an insight into his wounds and stripes, learn to prize their healing, and to them bring every disease, and pain, and grief till you are entered into your Lord's joy. Sit down at his feet, like Mary, and hearken what he will say concerning you. Attend upon him and he will preach to you, he will be your minister, and secretly manifest to you his love and grace; he will set you at liberty from all trials, and find a way for you to escape in all temptations, and be your present help in the time of trouble. I have proved him and found him thus to me, and I heartily recommend you to him, that you also may be his witnesses, and rejoice in your good Minister and Lord, who is only worthy to receive blessing, and honour, and glory for ever. Amen.

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F I N I S.

The Great Sacrifice.

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BEING THE
SUBSTANCE
OF A
DISCOURSE

Delivered in BATH,

In the YEAR 1753.

By JOHN CENNICK.

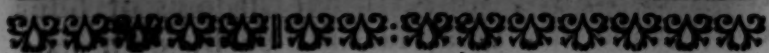
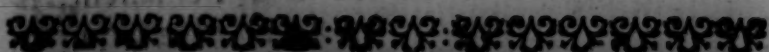
“ We are sanctified through the offering of the
body of Jesus Christ once for all,” Heb. x. 10.
“ Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us” 1 Cor.
v. 7. “ He has reconciled us in the body of his
flesh, through death,” Col. i. 21, 22. “ And this
he did when he offered up himself.” Heb. vii. 27.

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HEB. ix. 26.

“ Now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.”

THE antients differed very much about the author of this epistle, and though the most believed it to be St. Paul's, yet there are others who think it was wrote by Barnabas, and some few by St. Luke.

Most of the christian churches receive it as the work of the former, but whoever was the writer, it is certain, that we have not a more blessed part of the holy scriptures than this, and which is, as it were, a key to the whole Mosaical dispensation.

Whoever reads it, must see that the intent of the whole is, if possible, to remove what stumbled and offended the Jews in the person of our Saviour, and to prove out of the law and the prophets, and also out of the Psalms, that the Messiah should be God Almighty, that he should become man and die for his people, and by invin-

cible arguments out of the Old Testament, is proved that all the sacrifices, offerings, priesthood, laws and worship, ordained from the times of Moses, were all but shadows of Jesus Christ, and the great sacrifice of his own body offered once for all.

This is the aim of the whole epistle, and the language of the author throughout, betrays an earnest desire of the salvation of the Hebrews, or Jews, to whom it is dedicated; and also the Holy Ghost intends thereby to give us light into the offering of the Lamb of God, and to inspire us with the certainty of his priesthood and power to absolve from sin, that we might come to him and be saved, and be firm and eternal followers of this great Apostle of our profession, whose sacrifice is our hope and glory to all eternity.

If I speak of this text in order, then I must,

1st, Shew who he is who appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

2dly, What is meant by his appearing.

3dly, What the apostle would have us understand by his having come "now in the end of the world."

4thly, To shew how he hath "put away sin by the sacrifice of himself;" and to this head belongs the doctrine of his priesthood.

Lastly, I will shew what benefits we now receive through the sacrifice of Christ, and in what sense

sense we are priests to him upon earth, and attend to him in quality of servants, about his altar.

Of the first head I shall speak but a little in this place, because the chief matter which now must be considered, is the doctrine of his offering up his own Self to put away sin; but so much is needful to say, though I have often repeated it in many other discourses, and which can never too much be preached, that this Person of whom the whole epistle treats as well as all the scripture, is Jesus Christ the God of all the earth, the Lord from heaven, and who is very and essential God, equal to the Father, and his express image and substance, and the same with the Holy Spirit in the blessed Trinity from everlasting and to everlasting JEHOVAH. This has an unshaken foundation in the bible, and if any word in that book be true, then is this doctrine true, that Jesus the Son of Mary, who died upon the cross, in the reign of Tiberius Cæsar, at Jerusalem, is the Son of the living God. Amen. Be it so. Amen and Amen.

But what is meant in the second place by his appearing, since God often appeared; and we read frequently all through the prophets, how the Lord appeared to them, and they saw his similitude, and spoke with him face to face? The weight of this expression does not then lie herein, that he has appeared, though that really is amazing and awful, that the invisible and incomprehensible Jehovah has often spoke and appeared to his servants and church; but this is now to be understood, that this last time, he has appeared in the mean form of a servant, and as a man. When he appeared formerly, he did it in the form of an angel, or
some-

sometimes as a king sitting upon his throne with all his hosts adoring at his right hand and at his left hand, with the seraphims covering up their faces in their wings before him, and crying, holy, holy, holy is the Lord : And at other times, as the Antient of days, reverend and full of majesty ; with ten thousand times ten thousand ministering to him ; and often only in a pillar of fire, in a cloud, in glory, in great light, &c. But now, he who reared the noble arch of heaven, and built the house eternal, appears in the form of a carpenter, and he who made all things, and was before all beings, appears in the form of a new-born babe, and is found in a manger. He that was and is the immortal and unchangeable, appears in the form of sinful flesh, lower than the Father, lower than the angels, lower than any man, the very scorn of men and the outcast of the people. And wherefore has he so humbled himself ? why has he so appeared ? “ For the suffering of death.” When sin abounded and reigned in the world over all flesh, and none in heaven or earth, or under the earth, could help or deliver man out of his cursed and perishing condition, or make a sacrifice for sin, or offer up an atonement and make reconciliation, he that sat upon the throne said, “ Lo ! I come !” In the body of his flesh, he said, “ I will do thy will, O my God !” I will lay down my life and die, and be offered up as lamb for my sinful people, and so will end all mischief, and make peace. Hence he is called, “ The Lamb slain from the foundations of the world ;” and hence properly he merits that title, “ The Lamb of God.”

But what are we to understand by that part of the text, “ he has now appeared in the end of the world ?”

world?" for this is the third thing to be spoken of.

The fathers even before Christ, and much more since his incarnation, have divided the world into three parts: The beginning of the world was from Adam until Moses, and this was about two thousand years. In this time every father was priest to his own family; and though sacrifices were offered, and prayers made to the Lord, the divine service was not so regulated as that all should be the pattern perfectly of that which was to come. In this time God spoke to the fathers by visions, by dreams, voices, and in sundry kinds of manners; and to these he revealed the future salvation, and redemption by the sacrifice, or "bruising of the Seed of the woman," thro' the Holy Ghost, and "afar off they saw his day and were glad:" "They died in faith, and God was not ashamed to be called their God; yet, tho' they perhaps more innocently and freely escaped the depths of satan at that time, they did not see the salvation clearly, as in after ages; but the righteous men and kings, &c. wished to see the days of the Son of Man which we see, but did not see them. They desired to hear what we hear, but did not hear it. Thus it was in the first part of the world.

The second dispensation began in Moses's time, when the children of Israel were servants under the Egyptians in a strange land, and when many of them had mingled with the heathens and learned their works. Now God raised up his servants, Moses and Aaron to be their saviours, and by these he led them out "with a high hand and with a stretched-out arm," having shewn his wonders and terrors in Egypt; and when he had brought them

them through the deep of the sea into the land of the wilderness, he gave them the law and appointed the priesthood, regulated the order of the sacrifices, and sprinkling of blood, &c. This was called, the first covenant or Old Testament, and was sealed with the blood of bulls and goats, and to continue as a shadow 'till the seed of the woman, i. e. Christ should come : For Moses had been forty days in the mount with God, and had been shewn all the process of the redemption, how the Lord would become flesh, and like a lamb be offered up for sin upon the wood ; how his misery and the wrath of God shall burn like a fire ; how he should spread out his hands, in his high-priest's manner, and make intercession for the transgressors, and then sprinkle the people from their sin with his own blood ; and hence Moses was charged " to make and constitute all things according to the pattern shewed him in the mount," *Exod. xxv. 40.* and no wonder that hence we find the same faithful servant of God repeat it in the book of the law. " All these words the Lord commanded Moses," In this time God also spake by visions, by *Urim* and *Thummim*, &c. to the prophets, by whom the gospel was more clearly seen into ; and as the days of the Son of Man drew nearer, so they spake not as men who saw afar off. It is therefore we find in the prophets so much of the pure gospel, and such clear things of the Person, Godhead, and sufferings of the Lamb. But under the law, which lasted also about two thousand years, the most common way of preaching Christ, was in the sacrifices, which were offered daily, morning and evening, besides at other times of the new moons, solemn feasts, and days of expiation, and cele-

celebrating the feast of the passover. Here the manner of killing the lambs, offering up their bodies, the dress of the priests, the form of laying their hands upon the heads of the beasts, their washing their feet, sprinkling of blood and water, &c. are to be nicely observed, for they were exact figures of the offering up of the body of the true Lamb, who took away our sins in his death, and the sins of the whole world. This manner of divine service was continued till Jesus appeared, or as it is written of him, "until the Lord himself came into his temple," and thereby made the glory of the latter house to exceed the glory of the first, and this is the middle part of the world.

The end of the world is from Christ's sacrifice, to his second appearance on the clouds of heaven, when the mystery of God shall be finished. These days are called the latter days, by Joe', and by St. John when he saith, "this is the last time;" and in our text when the apostle says, "Now in the end of the world has God our Saviour appeared to put away sin." So justly may it be termed the last days, or end of the world, that we may be sure no other dispensation shall follow, no other change of doctrine or revelation, till Jesus is revealed from heaven in flaming fire: For, "in these last days, God has spoken to us by his Son;" not afar off, as to the fathers, not darkly as by Moses, but plainly, that we may hold fast his words 'till he comes, and every eye shall see him. How long he may delay his coming, or if according to our ideas, or manner of measuring time, he may come quickly, we do not know. It is our time now to have our lamps lighted, and we dressed with our wedding-garments, knowing it is the end of the world, that

if he come suddenly at evening, or midnight, or at cock-crowing, or in the morning, we may be ready to meet him with joy.

I come now, in the 4th place, to shew how "he has put away sin by the sacrifice of himself," and to speak of the priesthood of him who once offered up his own body for us.

The high-priest, under the law, was chosen out from among the people, and appointed for a year; and this was to signify that our High-Priest should be a man like to his brethren, tempted and tried with infirmities like them, that he might help us when we are tempted, and that we may not be terrified with his presence, and fly from him as at Sinai. Again, he was obliged to be separate from women at the time of ministration, to signify that Jesus should be a pure and undefiled virgin. Again, three days before the high-priest sacrificed he was ordered to wash his cloaths, and this Jesus did when, the third day before he offered up himself, he washed his raiment in a bloody sweat, and with which he now stands before the throne, namely, with his vesture dipped in blood. The high-priest was also ordered to wear upon his head a crown or mitre, and was deemed royal: and more, the name of Jehovah was wrote thereon, intimating, that the true High-Priest should be royal: "The King of kings, upon whose head are many crowns, and the name of the Lord is called upon him." Whoso looketh upon him may bow down without fear of sacrilege, and worship and adore him, who is verily and truly the Lord. Again, the priest's vestment was a white ephod or surplice, which was a shadow of righteousness, but it reached only to the knees, to shew that the righteousness

teousness of the law was not perfect; and therefore John says, "Jesus had a white garment down to the foot," because his righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and complete and perfect; and this is the white linen, the righteousness of the saints. Over this ephod the priests of Moses put on a robe embroidered with purple, blue, scarlet and gold; and this made him appear glorious in his apparel. So glorious did the King of Israel look in the day when he made the great oblation on the hills without the gates of Jerusalem. When he was stripped naked before all, and began his priestly office: when the scarlet blood, the purple wounds, and black and blue bruises mingled like embroidered work over his whole body. These wounds shine brighter than gold, and are dearer to his people, and more precious, than the finest gold of Ophir. But upon the priest's breast he wore the names of the children of Israel, engraved on precious stones; and this was done to shew how our High-Priest should have us graven upon his breast: The nails and spear have wrote our names on his hands, and on the precious stone of his heart. Therefore can it be said with all propriety, "our names are written in heaven?" The priests among the Jews had the sole care of offering up the sacrifice, laying their hands on the head of the victim, and praying for the people for whom it was offered, and pronouncing them blessed, &c. So Jesus was the sole contriver of the offering of which we speak: He prepared the body; He, the Lord God, provided the Lamb; he washed it in blood and water; he salted the sacrifice with briny and salt tears; he laid upon it the iniquities of us all, and laid down his own life; he spread his hands toward heaven, and made

the intercession for sinners ; he entered the holy place with his own blood, to appear in the presence of God for us (as the high-priest of the Jews, once a year, went into the holy of holies with the blood of others) ; and he only pronounces us absolved and pardoned, when he sprinkles his own blood on our hearts, and says, " This is the blood of the New Testament, which was shed for you and for many, for the remission of sin," But before ever the high-priest, after the order of Aaron, could minister, he was anointed with oil and consecrated in the most solemn manner ; so Jesus, the Man Christ Jesus, was anointed above his fellows ; the Holy Spirit was poured out upon him without measure, and he also was consecrated with an oath, " the Lord sware and will not repent : Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." Three things are found in our Saviour to qualify him to be a good high-priest, and such as suited with us : 1. He is God, and able to save to the uttermost. There is not a soul under heaven, who comes to him, however spoiled or undone, but he can absolve and forgive him. 2. He is the Son of Man, and to whom we may apply as to our brother. He is merciful and tender-hearted, and like as when he was in all his glory, he could not bear to see us lost, but was grieved to the heart at our fall, and came down to help us ; so now he has felt all our miseries and poor estate, he cannot send us empty away from him. 3. He is not like a priest after the order of Aaron, that by reason of death must cease to minister to our necessities, but he has an everlasting priesthood. He dieth no more. He lives for ever, and is a priest for evermore. Now, as well as on the very day of his sufferings, is he able to save ;

save; and his cries, and tears, and wounds, and blood, and death, have the same availing effect before the throne, and on the golden altar, as if now the smoak of his torment ascended up from the earth before the face of the Lord.

But now I must speak of the sacrifice, the burnt-offering which he made once for all. As in the day of expiation the sins of the whole house of Israel were laid on the head of the scape goat, and he was then brought out of their gates bearing away the sin; so when God our High-Priest knew the fulness of the time was come, he prepared also a victim, and laid on him the sin of the world. The whole blessed Trinity were one at this solemn and striking transaction, and officiated. The day of the feast of expiation was come; the day of the true passover, and on that very night whereon the Jews killed the paschal lamb, was our Passover slain. God Almighty took the sin of the first Adam, with all its dreadful and shocking consequences and effects, all the curse and chastisement due to the whole, and all our hurt, and laid the burden on the body and soul of Jesus. Therefore was he dumb before the rulers, and opened not his mouth: He saith, "O God, it was thy doing." He was therefore represented on that day as a goat in the law, and we know the reason: For a goat was the figure of a wicked man as the sheep was of one innocent: And on this account it is that the scripture saith, "He was reckoned with transgressors." He was esteemed the greatest sinner that ever was, and black, and laden with the crimes and misdemeanors of all the nations: Yea, "God made him to become sin for us, who knew no sin;" and heaped, as it were together,
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in him all evil, that in his death all might die, and the law be entirely fulfilled, and its revengeful spirit satisfied. Thus stood the second Adam, the Head and Representative of the whole race before the Jewish high-priest, who by the Holy Ghost confesses, "It is better that this Man die, and the whole nation perish not." When this was said, the Jewish priesthood ceased for ever, and the type was no more; and now Jesus was set at nought and given into the hands of wicked men, who were as the Levites, and took their office, and prepared the Lamb for his offering. Then, that the scripture might be fulfilled, "thou shalt shed the blood upon the ground." It is the blood which maketh the atonement for the soul. They began to wound and cut the Lamb of God. The thorns tore his head, and the scourges his back; and in this cruel and mangled plight they dragged him out, the true scape Goat, the true Lamb of God to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. The sacrifices had commonly been made upon the hills, and the chiefest on the mount Sion; but this Sacrifice was made on mount Calvary. The cross was the altar, and the nails served for knives to wound him to death. It was a custom among the Jews while the sacrifice was killing, and at the time of the setting fire to the wood to burn it, for all the priests and Levites to blow their trumpets toward heaven, and all the people shouted for joy; but instead thereof, at the dying of Jesus, all the harpers harped upon their harps, and all the angels of heaven blow their trumpets to the Lamb, while below all the spectators shouted with cruel joy. Here must be observed also another custom of the Jews at the feast of expiation, namely, when the high-priest had killed the bullock

bullock and goat, he took and sprinkled their blood towards the mercy-seat seven times; and thus did our good High-priest: for just so many times he sprinkled his own blood towards heaven: 1. When he was scourged: 2. When he was crowned with thorns: 3. When one hand was pierced: 4. When the other was also so cut through: 5. When one foot was wounded: 6. When the other was bored in like manner: And 7. When his side was opened. Thus our High Priest made the atonement, and sprinkled seven times the true blood for expiation of sin, on the great day of his sacrifice. Three hours, at least, he wept and bled, and suffered upon the altar, pouring out strong cries and tears, and with his hands spread towards heaven: And all known and unknown pangs he sustained: until the smock of his warm wreaking blood came up for an everlasting remembrance before God, and until he had fully endured the chastisement and curse of the world, and made an amends for all done amiss; and then knowing all things were accomplished which were written concerning him, "he bowed down his head and gave up the ghost." There hung the Ransom-Price just like a lamb; his legs red with pain, his heart melted, and he so besmeared and covered over with blood, that he really appeared like a burnt-offering. This dying of God's only Child, this free-will offering of his body once for all, had such an effect in heaven, that (though millions of bullocks, rams, goats, and calves of a year old, with rivers of oil and sweet spices, had been offered before him for four thousand years in vain, and without being able to wash away one sin, or make reconciliation) now the Most High was so pleased,

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his law so fulfilled, and his justice so satisfied, that for the sake of this Sacrifice, and on the sole account of this Oblation, he passed the general pardon, sin ceased before his face, and the curse vanished; so that calling the things that were not as though they were, and foreseeing what an effect this should have in its due time, he again pronounced the world and lost man, "Very good." Thus then sin was put away, and thus Jesus the Lamb of God carried it into the wilderness, into the land of forgetfulness, that God might remember it no more. Thus was Jesus the true scape Goat, the Lamb of God which took away the sin of the world.

I come in the last place to shew what benefits we now receive by this Sacrifice, and in what sense "we are priests to God and the Lamb upon earth." Many receive this glorious doctrine of redemption by the Sacrifice of Christ in theory, and yet I fear have had nothing really and indeed in the hearts of the amazing and deep benefits of this Sacrifice. The sacrifices of the Old Testament could indeed strike and affect them who looked on, and the shedding of blood has always spoke, but those sacrifices did not cleanse the conscience, or make the comers thereunto perfect. Guilt still remained upon those that offered them, and upon those for whom they were offered; because it was impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sin, or quench the divine wrath; and this David knew when he confessed, "sacrifices and offerings thou wouldst not, neither hast thou pleasure therein;" and for which cause Jesus saith, "but a body hast thou prepared me, lo! I come to do thy will." In this therefore the sacrifice of Christ transcends all other: His blood purges the consciences of those who by faith
look

look on, and his blood speaks peace and pardon in the hearts of such as come and behold him crucified. The Holy Ghost, the Spirit of Christ, and who comes in the name of Jesus, takes the blood of the New Testament and besprinkles body and soul, so that we who believe can say, "I have found redemption in his blood, even the forgiveness of sins." And this is no fancy, no bare reflection or meditation; but as certainly as we have once felt the intolerable weight of sin, and known our guilt, so certainly do we know we are pardoned by the offering up of the body of Christ for us. We have been up at his sacrifice, we have been washed in the laver of his blood and water, and have now our ephods clean and white, and stand round about his altar with linen garments, kings and priests to our God. As it was the office of the priests formerly to offer their prayers while the smoak of the sacrifice went up toward heaven, so we offer all our prayers and praises in the smoak of the torment of Jesus Christ: we know nothing is sweet till perfumed with this incense; nothing is hallowed or sanctified, but as it is laid on this Golden Altar, and sprinkled with this blood. Again, as the priests formerly sung and blew trumpets all the while the sacrifice burned; so all our hymns and songs of praise are nothing else but a solemn thanksgiving; that by the sacrifice of Christ all our sins are remitted and pardoned, and blotted out, and put away. On this account we sing with such inconceivable pleasure of his death, of his wounds, and how he poured out his soul. We know how we, who once feared to approach the throne of God because we were unclean, now can come boldly and minister in our white garments without fear. This is our office as long as we are in the world, and this we shall not

cease to do when in heaven. To us who believe, and have our sins put away, it is given to be present with the Lamb, and to stand so in faith, as if we were among the multitude who were his murderers. We are his witnesses, as if we had seen him die; and while others deride and mock, or slight and despise the Lamb, we worship and minister to him. Our whole business for ever is to plead and offer his death and sacrifice before God, and to blow our trumpets in his praise to the world, and before all the first-born; and in this we do nothing more than mingle with that innumerable company, who now are bowing before him, as he sits upon his throne stained with his own blood, in the office of the High Priest over the whole house of God, and thank and bless him in their language; for we, as well as all the rest now with him, have been redeemed and ransomed by him. "Therefore with angels and archangels, and all the goodly company of heaven, we worship him that sits upon the throne, even the Lamb that was slain, saying, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord, and blessed be his name for ever and ever. Amen."

An H Y M N.

I.

O JESUS, Son of God!
 Who lov'd the world so dear,
 That thou, to save 't, in flesh and blood
 Didst in the world appear:
 With tears of thankfulness
 Our souls remember thee,
 In all thy weakness and disgrace,
 And pain and misery.

II.

Thee on that night we view,
 When Judas thee betray'd:
 We see thee with the soldiers go,
 With all thy raiment red:
 For with thy bloody sweats,
 Thy cloaths, thou Child divine!
 Appear'd like those who tread the fats,
 And roll their cloaths in wine.

III.

Soon thorns thy temples crown'd,
 Then scourg'd before the crowd,
 'Till streams of blood from ev'ry wound
 Down thy dear body flow'd:
 When fore thy flesh was hewn,
 That ev'n the bones were seen,
 Then wast thou to thy people shewn;
 One cry'd, "Behold the Man!"

IV.

Thy pain here ended not,
 Thou yet thy cloaths must wear,
 And on these shoulders, raw and cut,
 Thy heavy cross must bear:

Then

Then down didst meekly lay,
(O dearest Lamb of God!)
And let them tear thy cloaths away,
And with them skin and blood.

V.

Thy hands and feet they tore,
Then nail'd thee on the tree;
O then what grief didst thou endure,
What pain and misery!
Oppress'd unspeakably
With all mankind's misdeeds;
All unbelief and misery!
Behold! he hangs and bleeds.

VI.

Three long and bitter hours
He groan'd and cry'd aloud;
The rulers of infernal pow'rs
So long afflicted God:
Then fell beneath their stroke
The Prince and Lord of all!
And down death, hell, and sin he broke
In his amazing fall!

VII.

Thus he for sin aton'd,
Thus paid the ransom-price;
And thus the Lamb of God was bound,
And made a sacrifice:
Salvation to the Lamb!
Through heav'n immediate rung:
Salvation to Immanuel's name!
Shall ever be our song.

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F I N I S.

Lot's Flight.

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BEING THE
SUBSTANCE
OF A
DISCOURSE

DELIVERED IN
PEMBROKE,

On Sunday, October 14, 1753.

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By JOHN CENNICK.

“Remember Lot's Wife.” Luke xvii. 32.

THE FIFTH EDITION.

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GEN. xix. 17.

Escape for thy Life; look not behind thee; neither stay thou in all the Plain: escape to the Mountain, lest thou be consumed.

THESE words the angels spake to Lot and his family when they had brought them out of Sodom, and were about to take leave of them. The blessed spirits seemed apprehensive of their being yet in danger either of loitering, or looking back, or staying in the plain, though they were out of the city, and therefore puts them in mind their lives were at stake, and to be disobedient now, or to delay, would be to run the risk of being consumed, and, in the most pressing manner, charges them in my text, to make the best of their way, and fly for their lives.

This part of the divine history is really most affecting: Here we may see at once both the goodness and severity of God, his goodness in saving Lot's house, his severity in destroying the cities of that country in so awful a manner.

It appears, by what precedes my text, that all those unhappy cities, and the country round about, had abounded in all plenty, and pride, and fulness of bread, as we read in Ezek. xvi. 49. had made them forget God, and in general they

were gone into strange and unnatural lusts, so that "the cry of their sins was gone up to heaven, and the Lord was come down to destroy it." We read in the eighteenth chapter, that three angels came to Abraham the day before, and staid with him all night, but two of them only came to Sodom, and rose up early in the morning; but the third, who no doubt was the Angel of the covenant, Christ Jesus, staid behind and revealed to Abraham what was in his heart to do to Sodom and the adjacent cities. For a good while the faithful patriarch pleaded, and made intercession for the city, but at last he submitted, and the "Lord went his way from communing with Abraham, and he returned to his place."

Here we may observe many things worthy our notice: First, how our Saviour would not bring his judgments upon a wicked place, but he would first acquaint his servants, lest they should have been too much surprized at the sudden stroke, or questioned if the righteous were not destroyed as well as the ungodly, and so might have all their life-time been in jeopardy, lest he that had visited so heavily those of Sodom, might by and by visit them also in the same way; therefore would God set the matter in a right light before his children, ere the vengeance and the storm fell.

Again, we may see how our Saviour humbled himself to stay and lodge in a tent, and disdained not of old to appear in the form of a man, for in the human form he and his angels appeared to Abraham, chap. xvii. 2. We have no right to grudge this happiness to Abraham, Lot, &c. for the same Lord and Saviour yet dwells with his children, and not as a guest that tarrieth for a night, but he comes to make his abode with us; and

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no doubt many angels guard the beds and houses of such as are heirs of salvation. And this is no wonder that they minister to us in this way, for they were witnesses what Jesus suffered to redeem us, and saw him in his worst agonies and sorrows to save us, and must count it an honour to attend upon souls whom God purchased with his own blood. Might they speak with us, I am persuaded they would often accost us, as once Gabriel did the blessed virgin, with "Hail, thou highly favoured;" but this shall be done in worlds to come; and now they are continually ascending and descending before the throne, to receive orders concerning us; and are daily employed and busied in ministering and serving to us: But I think we have a good reason to give why we may not see them, but upon some particular occasions, nor speak with them; and that is, lest we should be tempted to worship them, or ascribe our safety to them, and dishonour and even rob our Saviour their Master and Maker; and had we liberty to commune with them, it would not be so well with us as now, for then we should be too apt to live without that near fellowship which we now have with Jesus Christ himself, and this is better than to have communion with all the angels in heaven.

But another thing is observable, and that is, the diligence which was seen in the angels, for "they rose up early in the morning," and went about their grand business, which was the saving of Lot, the nephew of Abraham. O that the ministers, who are a sort of angels to the churches, and have an office, in many respects, like the angels, would learn hence, that their business is the king's business, and requires haste, and that early and late they
would

would pursue it, and even not stay to salute any man by the way, when Jesus sends them; I mean, not stand complimenting and trifling with souls, but plainly, boldly, and at the loss of all things, deal in their work as servants of that Master, with whom is no respect of persons, and have his charge so at heart, that till they have finished their course, and laid down their staff and sandals, they might grudge no labour and spare no pains to win souls out of danger, and get them to flee out of spiritual Sodom.

When the angels came into the city, they stood in the street opposite to Lot's door, as if they would try the good man, but he would not rest till they were come in to him, but little thought who he had entertained. He little thought that they were come to be saviours to him; such blessings yet attend the receiving and being hospitable to strangers. Many, who have received unawares a child of God into their houses, may, in the last day, hear our Saviour say to them, "I was a stranger and ye took me in;" and when they shall say, "When, Lord?" He shall answer, "Inasmuch as ye did it to one of the least of these my brethren, ye did it to me." As soon as Lot had brought in his guests, the men of the city, filled with lust, would rush in also and know these men; and all the entreaties and wholesome advice he could make use of was of so little effect, that they were only so much the ruder, till the angels pulled in Lot, and smote the men with blindness. Hear this, ye poor adulterers, ye unclean, and ye who abuse yourselves with lusts, and know that the whole is but fuel for the fire of the last day; but get you to the cold sweat of Jesus, those great drops alone can check and damp the unholy fire, and make you, though
ever

ever so polluted, clean; and like virgins before the throne of God.

As soon as Lot was got in again, the angels began their weighty message thus: "Hast thou any sons or daughters, or sons in law in this place? or whatever thou hast, bring them out of this city; for we will destroy it. The cry of their sin is gone up to heaven, and the Lord has sent us to destroy it." Lot believed the word of God immediately, and went out to warn his sons in law, and those of his children that were married out, but all in vain. He seemed to them only as one that had dreamed. I suppose he told them, Up, my children, and come out of this city with me; for, before the sun is well risen to-morrow, this place shall be laid in ashes, and the souls therein shall perish. But, as I said, however affecting and awful the warning had been to him, it had no great effect on them. They thought, Poor Lot! he has got new fancies; he has always preached to us before now, but this is a new fear that has got into his brain; and they mocked him, and he went grieved away. Just so the scoffers of our age make their game, and the drunkards make songs on such as come to invite them from endless ruin: And they do it upon the same ground as the children and relations of Lot when they mocked him. I do not doubt but they looked out and saw the evening as clear and calm as ever, no sign of any storm, nor a thunder-cloud in all the sky, nor the least appearance of lightnings, or any other blazing lights in the air; and so could reasonably conclude, it was only a dream of their religious but weak-headed father. Men may now see no sign of any approaching evil, bless God that they live in a land of plenty, under a mild government, and in peace, and out of fear of invasions

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from abroad, &c and so can despise their religious parents kind admonitions and warnings, laugh at the preachers of God's word, and mock those who would beseech them to be reconciled to God, and come out of the world to be saved: But let them only remember the words of our Saviour, "As it was in the day when Lot went out of Sodom, they eat, they drank, were married and given in marriage, they bought, they sold, they planted and builded, till the fire and brimstone rained down from heaven and destroyed them all; so, he says, shall it be when the Son of man shall come in his day. Watch ye, therefore, lest that day come suddenly, and ye be unprepared."

When Lot was returned home, and the day broke, the angels hastened him, and bid him "fly with his wife, and the two young daughters who were there with him, lest he also should perish in the same iniquity as the city." He had been striving and labouring with others so long, that he had well nigh staved and perished himself. This should serve to teach us, that though we do right in warning, yet in intreating and persuading our friends and relations to come with us and follow the Lamb; yet if they will not, we must not stay with them: In this case, therefore, we must leave our father and mother, and brethren and sisters, and wife and children, or whoever is dear to us, and go to heaven without them, rather than by thinking to yield a little for the present, to succeed with our purpose hereafter, we stay ourselves and be involved in their ruin. This has many times been the case: Arise, therefore, and leave all the world, and follow thou Jesus out of the camp, bearing his reproach, for the Lord will certainly destroy this place: this world shall soon be consumed, and all the kindreds of the earth shall

shall mourn in that day, when he will burn up all like an oven, and when all the ungodly shall be like stubble before his fire. In that day shall it be said, "Blessed are all they that have put their trust in him."

I suppose Lot had much to do, and was careful what he should pack up, and what he should want on his flight, &c. Hence it is said, "He lingered, and then the angels took hold on his hand, and on the hand of his wife, and on the hand of his two daughters, (the Lord being merciful to them) and brought them out of the gate of Sodom," and then gave them a solemn charge, "Now escape for thy life, look not behind thee, stay not in all the plains lest thou be consumed, but escape to the mountains, for I can do nothing till thou art come."

Who could have thought that Lot, who had so stedfastly believed the word of God, and had so eagerly laboured to get out his children and relations, could have lingered himself? Yea this went so far, that had not the Lord been doubly merciful to him, he had staid and perished after all.

Hear this, ye serious people, who surely believe that the Lord will destroy this world, who look upon yourselves as called out of it, and who are pilgrims and strangers in the earth, and who yet linger. You are so careful of your many matters, so busied and cumbered about many things, that though called so long ago, you have not perhaps yet fled to the refuge, nor laid hold on the horns of the altar; you have not yet made your calling and election sure, nor got safety in God's hiding place. O may the Lord be merciful to you, and take hold on your hands and hearts, and bring you out! May he force you from your cares and lingering in your uncertain state, and with a high h^o d and

stretched-out arm lead you out of all danger, and set you above the reach of men or devils : Nor let this world, or the world to come, nor life, nor death, or any power be ever able to pluck you out of his hands, or separate you from his love.

When Lot heard this, and knew the mountains were at a great distance, and began to tremble for fear he should not be able to reach them before the storm fell, he entreated the Lord to let him turn into a cave in the little city of Zoar ; and God said, " See, I have accepted thee in this thing ; make haste, for I can do nothing till thou art come thither." Here is mercy upon mercy, and grace for grace ! For though he had loitered, the Lord would not destroy Sodom till he was safe ; and when his strength failed, and he could not hold out to the mountains, God provided him a cave of refuge in Zoar, and hid him there till the wrath was overpast. I do not doubt but as soon as he entered the cave and saw the flames fall, and heard the overthrow of the cities, he adored that Lord who had been merciful to him and brought him out, and comforted himself in his little asylum. Here I will leave him then and his daughters a little, and look back upon his poor wife ; for she, notwithstanding the strict charge of the angel, " Look not behind thee," had ventured to do it, and was struck dead, and left as a standing monument of disobedience upon the plain. She had left the city, with her husband and daughters, but, perhaps, thought upon the riches, the fine streets and well-adorned houses, which now must all be burnt and destroyed, and in her heart turned back ; and, while she looked about to see the city once more before it was in flames, she was turned into a pillar of salt. So some have left the world in
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its lying vanities, have forsook all the delicacies of the mother of harlots, and followed the Saviour and his people a little while, but have by-and-by secretly wished for some of the old pleasures, the sweet darling sins which they had left; they have forgot that they were called to be a sort of spiritual Rachabites, and have wanted houses, lands, or wished to indulge themselves a little longer in the feasts and drinkings of this world before it should be all burnt up; and they have been there left and made spectacles for angels and men, who were unworthy of the kingdom, and loved the world better than our Saviour. O my dear friends, you who are now escaped out of the world, and at any time should find a hankering after the things you have left, hear what our Saviour says, "Remember Lot's wife!" Yes, remember her fall, and run your race, looking to Jesus, resolved not to go back, nor even to look back, lest you also fall through the same example of unbelief.

The same message which the angels brought to Lot, I bring to you to-day, "Up, for the Lord will destroy this place." This world, however fine and goodly, however pleasant or valuable, shall, ere long, feel the fire of the great Refiner. The beautiful sun, that governed this day, shall be darkened, the moon shall be turned to blood; and those bright stars that have ruled the night, and lightened the dark pavilion of the heavens, shall fall and be darkened: Every mountain and the green hills shall depart, and every well-built city, and every fine house, shall be destroyed, and not one stone left upon another which shall not be thrown down. Let me not seem to you as one that has dreamed: Do not believe as the sons and daughters of Lot, but know ye, "the mouth of

the Lord hath spoken it, and he will do it. Up, then, and escape for your life, for your eternal life, look not behind you, neither stay in all the plains, lest you be consumed."

"Escape for thy life:" This belongs to every soul under heaven, and intimates so much: Thou art in danger, thy life is at stake, but there is a refuge; there is a storm coming, but there is a hiding-place prepared by him who is not willing any should perish, but that all should come to the Knowledge of the Truth and be saved. If the danger I speak of was only that of losing our temporal lives, O that would be but little; and yet, even in such a case, what pains and labours do some take; and at what expences are they to support or to preserve a life, which is but like a weaver's shuttle, and like a dream at best? But the life I speak of is for ever and ever. If you therefore have a mind to escape the danger of the second death, if you have a desire to get everlasting life, you may. Our Saviour sets it before you, and tells you, "Come unto me, believe in me, look upon me, and you shall not perish, you shall have everlasting life." He has appointed a place of sanctuary, a refuge in the stormy wind and tempest; and whoever sees or fears the impending judgments which shall come upon the world; whoever is willing to leave all and follow him, he shall not cry as if there was no safety, he shall not be in such a state for which there is no remedy, no help, no cure; for though his sins are numberless, great and heinous; though the remembrance of them is grievous, and the burden of them intolerable; though they were more in number than the hairs upon his head, and though his heart fails, still there is a place to fly to, there is an
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asylum, there is an altar, a sanctuary, from which none have ever been dragged. It is the cross of Jesus, it is our Saviour: Escape hither, and thy soul shall live. Whoever comes to his blood shall never perish; it is the very fountain of life, and was opened because of sin and uncleanness. Out of mere pity and grace our Saviour contrived this, for the healing of the nations, and invites all to these waters: All the many heavy and even terrible things spoken of in the scripture, either of the judgment to come, of death, or the chains of darkness, is only, if possible, to awaken the soul to a sense of the reality of that loss it can sustain if it stays with the world in the unregenerate state; and, therefore is it as often, and far more often shewn what love Jesus bears to sinners; how he has died for them; how he is not pleased with the death of them that die, but would have them come to him, and be saved; and the language of his tender heart hourly is: "Escape for thy life: Come to me, and I will receive thee; ask of me, and I will give thee living water: Escape to me, and thou shalt live." May all that hear me obey his voice, hearken, and come, and so save their souls alive!

The next part of the text is: "Look not behind thee." This belongs to such as have been awakened, and are really concerned about their salvation. Our Saviour knew how many snares should be laid for such well-meaning souls; how many contrivances satan and the world would have to seduce them back; therefore in general he charges them: "Look not behind thee. Remember Lot's wife." Remember, "he that putteth his hand to the plow and looks back, is not fit for the kingdom of God." The charge he gave the prophet, who
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cried against the altar in Bethel, is what he gives to thee, "Turn not again by the way thou camest." You know what wonders God wrought in saving his people once out of Egypt; how he fought for them, how he dried up a way for them through the sea, and made the waters stand on heaps on each side till they were safe over; how he plagued Egypt till they let them go, and at last buried all the hosts of Pharaoh that pursued them in the deeps of the waters, and then set the good land of Canaan before them—"a land flowing with milk and honey; the glory of all lands." But after all, those who before had groaned under the bondage of the heathen, and had cried in their affliction and were delivered, forgot it, and began to wish for the flesh-pots of Egypt, garlick, onions, and cucumbers; and though they had manna and fowl in abundance, and were kept with water out of the rock, they were not contented: "In their hearts, it is said, they turned back into Egypt; wherefore God was not pleased with them, but they perished in the wilderness." They despised the land before them, and chose present blessings, though so small and trifling, and it became a hurt to them, so that they could not enter into his rest. Many serious people set out after a good manner, they run well, till by and-by somewhat of their old pleasures appear before them, their company persuade, their own lusts tempt, and the enemy is perpetually busy in seeking to get them to look back, and at last he succeeds; "they return as a dog to his vomit, and as a sow that is washed to her wallowing in the mire." These are they, who, for the sake of temporal riches, or pleasures, or for other things, venture the loss of the heavenly Canaan, the New-Jerusalem,

Jerusalem, and the true promised land; these are they who look back, and fall again into their old sins by little and little, and despise the glory of all lands. Not so did Moses; he chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to be a prince, and be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, and enjoy the pleasures of sin, which are for a season. His eye was to another world; nor would he look back till he had entered, by the gates, the paradise of God. Be ye, my brethren, not like the disobedient wife of Lot; count it not a pity that this whole world, and its fashions and rarities pass away, and are burnt up without being enjoyed by you; you have a better world, and a kingdom that cannot be shaken before you. Nor be you like the foolish Israelites, who forgot so easily and so soon their cruel servitude in Egypt, and only remembered their flesh-pots and herbs, and so displeased God their Saviour. No, never forget the cruel slavery you have been in under the yoke of satan, and out of what extreme distress and deep misery you have groaned when you served sin, and felt the fearful smart of a guilty mind, and the looking for judgment. Above all, forget not the price God the Lamb paid to rescue you from such a thralldom and cursed state; how he trembled and sweat blood, and was so many years acquainted with grief only to ransom you. O do not play with the Most High, or trifle with Jesus; but leave all, nor dare cast a wishful look back on any of your former sins, or on this world, for it is dangerous; but, "escape for thy life, and look not behind thee."

The third part of the text is: "Neither stay thou in all the plains; escape to the mountains, lest thou be consumed."

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This belongs to people who are come out from the world, who are very much against looking back, but yet settle in a strange lukewarm estate; and with all their cry against the world, and condemning of apostates, themselves are staying, as it were, in the plains, and not arrived at the mark of the prize of their high calling; they are not yet happily persuaded of their interest in Christ; they have not received the earnest of their everlasting inheritance, and do not know their sins are forgiven. Of these there are many in the world whose hearts daily misgive them, and who inwardly feel they are not right, and yet stay or halt, almost persuaded to be christians. These are they to whom the Holy Ghost gives this advice, "Stay not in all the plains, but escape to the mountains." By the mountains we may understand, in a spiritual sense, the mount Zion, the everlasting hills, the end and height of all our aims in this pilgrimage. But lest you might think as Lot did when he found himself grow weary and tired, "O let me turn into Zoar and live;" lest you might think, O I am afraid I shall never hold out, I shall not arrive timely to the mount of God, I feel my strength very little, and my corruptions and sins strong: therefore has God, your God, the Saviour, your Saviour, prepared for you a Zoar; he has ordered a cave whereto you may fly; it is his own open side! His wounds are the best refuge, the safest and most secure place to fly to in heaven and earth. Methinks I hear him say to you, I know thy weakness; I know thy little strength, and how thou wouldst not hold out till thou shouldst reach the eternal rest; the storm would have surely overtaken thee, and thou wouldst have been consumed; therefore behold my hands and my feet; see my pierced side, and turn in there,
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and no harm shall befall thee. This shall be to thee like the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. This is the voice of our Beloved; and this is his language to guilty souls, who are flying for their lives. There is indeed no other plea you may try, and God's sword will find you; his fire shall burn you out: the avenger of blood will pursue you, and cut you in pieces; but turn in there; fly to the wounded Lamb of God, take refuge under his shadow, and you shall be safe in time and in eternity, in the hour of death and in the day of judgment. O turn to that friend of sinners, that city of refuge; betake yourself to Jesus, and lay open all your frights and fears, your guilt and sins before him. He will hear you, he will accept you, and shew mercy to you, and under his wings you shall rest, and none shall make you afraid.

Just so as Lot could comfort himself in his cave, when all around him was in flames, so shall you comfort yourself in Christ's wounds, and in his arms you shall feel that peace the busy and cumbered world are strangers to; that joy which they meddle not with; and that safety in the assurance of your everlasting part in the love of God as is inexpressible. You will then be for inviting all into your strong-hold; every affrighted sinner you will call into your refuge, and every uneasy heart intreat to come and rest with you out of the reach of all harm or dangers. Do not then linger any longer you half-minded people, nor make light of it; for hear only how weighty it is to our Lord God, "I can do nothing, he saith, till thou art come." As if he had said, knowest thou, my poor child, why the angels with their destroying weapons are ordered not yet to destroy: or why those who have the power over the winds, are forbid to hurt the earth, or any

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green tree: or why the so long threatened tempest is delayed, and the storm kept back? it is because thou art not yet marked, thou art not yet got into the city of refuge; thou art in an unsafe and insecure estate, and I am so tender over thee, I cannot suffer the last trumpet to blow, nor set the angel to proclaim "time shall be no longer," till thou hast escaped into the true Zoar; till my new name has sealed thee to the day of redemption, and my bleeding wounds have sheltered thee, O my child, make haste and escape hither, for I can do nothing till thou art come. This is indeed the case: if Jesus was not in heaven, with his vesture dipt in blood; if his cries and tears did not avail so powerfully, and his intercession take such effect, before now we had been like Sodom and Gomorrah, or Admah and Zeboim; and Tyre and Sidon had not been in a more wretched estate than we. And this is the true reason why judgments and sudden taking of vengeance is not so frequent now as formerly: then fire from heaven, earthquakes, plagues, and many shocking strokes of divine justice chastened the sins of whole countries, and of particular men, but now our High-priest stands before the throne; he spreads out his hands, and turns away the wrath. Instead thereof he invites the sinner to him, and having borne the storm and weight of all our wrath in his own body and soul when he hung on the tree, he has the just right to shelter whom he will. May all that hear me to-day take the alarm, "Up for the Lord will destroy this place." And because ye surely expect it yourselves, and believe ere long the world that now is, shall be consumed, and that all who belong to it will perish, therefore, "escape for your lives, look not behind you, nor stay in all the plains; but hasten to Jesus, and obtain of him pardon

don and eternal life; and then let the judgments come when they will, you shall be safe, and like virgins ready to meet the Bridegroom. You shall not be in danger by any means; Jesus shall be your Saviour, and "the eternal God your refuge; his everlasting arms shall be underneath you," and his wounds shall shelter you in your last hours, in the great day and in all eternity. You shall find what the scripture means which saith, "A man shall be for a hiding-place in the storm, and a covert in the wind and tempest, and like the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." In the day when the sign of the Son of Man shall be seen coming in the clouds of heaven in his Father's glory, and with his ten thousands of saints, and all his holy angels, when the heavens shall melt at his presence, and a shower of fire shall burn up the earth, and all shall tremble and be shaken terribly, that soul shall be happy who has made his wounds their Zoar, and who have in time of grace and salvation fled to his side for refuge. That harbour is safer and better than the city into which Lot turned; more secure than the sanctuary in the temple, and that cave more nigh to every affrighted soul, who would fain flee from wrath to come, and more real commodious and suitable than that wherein Lot hid with his daughters, or that wherein Elias was preserved when the strong wind passed by before the Lord, and rent the mountains, and broke in pieces the rocks, and which was followed by an earthquake and fire: for when once a poor sinner is become a refuge here, and is got to his crucified Saviour, and by faith has laid hold on his grace, and entered into his embraces, persecutions, sicknesses, troubles, losses, famine, the sword, and death with all his terrors; and satan with all his rage, may pass
by

by and threaten, but "no harm shall happen unto them, nor any evil come near their dwelling." Should such an one be called suddenly at midnight to meet the Bridegroom, he is ready, like a virgin with his lamp burning; and should he see all in flames about him, and find men's hearts failing, he could sing with a holy triumph, The Lord, the eternal God is my refuge, my fortress, my tower, my safe-guard, my strong-hold, the Lord is my hiding-place and my sanctuary for ever!"

Thus shall the man be blessed who takes the Lord's warning, and escapes to Jesus. Thus may you and I be blessed; and as long as we live may we live in this safety; and when we die may we depart in peace, and stand in the judgment boldly, and be indeed like doves who are fled to the clefts of the rock, and are saved.

Grant this, O most dear Saviour, to all here, for thy tender mercies sake. Amen.

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Deliverance from Death.

BEING THE 4455. a 8
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SUBSTANCE
OF A
DISCOURSE

Preached at KINGSWOOD,

Sunday, March 25, 1753.

By JOHN CENNICK.
Late of Reading, in Berkshire.

“Jesus said, he that believeth on me hath everlasting life. This is the bread that cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die,” John vi. 47, 50. “Lord, to whom shall we go, thou hast the words of eternal Life.” ver. 68. “Jesus Christ hath abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light, through the gospel,” 2 Tim. 1. 10.

THE THIRD EDITION.

LONDON:

Printed and sold by H. TRAPP, No. 1, Paternoster-Row. 1787.

Deliverance from Death

BEING THE

SUBSTANCE

OF A

DISCOURSE

Preached at KINGSWOOD,

Sunday, March 22, 1752.



By JOHN WILKINSON, M.A.

John said, he that is born of the water and the Spirit, shall have eternal life. This is the great comfort down from heaven, that a man may be born again, and not be born of flesh, but of the Spirit, to whom God gives the word of eternal life, and the Spirit of God dwells in him, and he shall have eternal life.

THE SECOND EDITION

LONDON:

Printed and sold by H. LARSEN, No. 12, Palace-Yard, 1752.

JOHN viii. 51.

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my sayings, he shall never see death.”

THESE words of our Saviour, like many other of his sayings, are too lightly passed over, and not regarded, as being difficult to be understood, and appearing a sort of parable, although nothing concerns us more, or is more certain and true.

Whoever reads the holy scriptures must needs observe that many such places as this are found therein; and no doubt many, like the Jews, are offended with them, and serious people, who dare not reject any part of the oracles of God, and yet see daily the just and the unjust fall alike a prey to the grave, must wondering think, “How can this be?”

I will therefore, in this discourse, treat of this matter freely, and shew what properly death is; what it is to keep his sayings; and confirm this blessed doctrine out of the scriptures, “that whosoever keeps his word shall not taste of death;” or, as once he said to Mary and Martha, the sisters of Lazarus, at another time, “they shall never die!”

It is very certain that, in this place, by death is not meant the departure of the soul out of the

body, nor is it the language of the Holy Ghost, either in the Old or New-Testament, to call our leaving this world, death; but, on the contrary, it is generally said of such as die in faith among the patriarchs and prophets, "such an one was gathered to his people;" or, "Slept with his fathers;" or, "gave up the ghost." So Daniel saith, "they that sleep in the dust:" and very seldom it is said they died, unless spoken of unbelievers, or such as were not people of God; and herein the nice divinity of the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls is to be observed in the New-Testament, for speaking of the decease of Lazarus, to his disciples, he saith, "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth;" and only on account of the weakness of his followers, who did not understand him, he said, "He is dead." After the same manner he said in the house of the ruler, when the mourners were lamenting over a departed child, "Give place, she is not dead, but sleepeth," Matt. ix. 24. Thus the Lord would have us look upon the natural change which good and bad experience. The apostles followed our Saviour in this way of speaking, and so wrote of Stephen, "That he fell asleep." And St. Paul calls such as were departed in Christ, persons "who sleep in Jesus," 1 Thess. iv. 14. But what properly then is death? When God had blessed Adam and Eve in paradise, he forewarned them not to eat of one tree, saying, "In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die;" and this undoubtedly came to pass, according to the word of the Lord; for though Adam lived some hundred years after he had eaten the forbidden fruit, yet that same day, in which he sinned, the life which God breathed into his heart, when he became a living soul, departing from

from him, and he became dead to God while he lived. Thus death entered the world temporal and spiritual; and in this sense it is said, "In Adam all died," i. e. all were robbed of divine life, and lost that which is the image of God, and which is only recovered by faith in Christ, who came to be a quickning spirit, and to give life to the world.

I know that some think the death threatened to Adam, was only temporal, and that his sin only rendered him subject to die, or made him mortal; and that because a thousand years are, with the Lord, as one day; so it might, in a certain sense, be said, he died that day he sinned, because he died before he had seen a thousand years; but this sense is far too shallow, and serves only to please such as would not willingly allow of all becoming sinners, and dying spiritually in Adam. Which is a doctrine most surely true, and according to the scriptures. I cannot look upon temporal death as a curse, or that we suffer any thing through God's ordering the cherubim to guard the tree of life, that Adam might not eat of it, and live for ever; but I think it was the tender mercy of our Saviour, who, after sin had entered, and death and hell followed, designed we should not live for ever in that fallen state, but let our poor bodies return again to dust, from whence they were formed, and rest there till he should create all things new, in which day they might rise again in likeness of his glorious body. And thus if a man, by mischance, had let some goodly grain, such as wheat or barley, fall into some nasty ditch, or dirty place, so that it was no longer fit for use; his best way would be to sow it, and he would nevertheless lose nothing by it, but

but get a good harvest out of it. Even so the good Husbandman does with our mortal and vile bodies : He sows us in likeness of his death, that we may be raised in likeness of his resurrection. And, indeed, one can easily see that temporal death is now of no harm to us ; for how miserable would our lives be, after we had passed some hundred years, and were sickly, infirm, and a burden to ourselves and all round about us ? It is better, as I said before, that we can lay down our poor spoiled tabernacles, and rest till the Lord comes : And this must be looked upon in no other light, if we believe, than that the weary pilgrim has laid by his staff and accomplished his warfare in a good age, and is now resting in the same bed, in the same earth, from whence they were born, and where once their dear Lord lay. A believer cannot have such ideas of the grave as those under the law had ; for we cannot dread it as a pit, or a prison, but as our beds, out of which we surely awake, and sing, " O grave, where is thy victory ? "

But this is not an easy matter to a person unconverted, I mean one who was never quickened by Jesus Christ, or ever knew what it meant, to get eternal life by believing in his name. These are dead indeed : And however far they have advanced in the form of godliness, and can make their boast how well they have lived, how little evil they have done, how much they have served God, and are educated and brought up in the best church, yet God shall say of such, " I know thy works ; thou hast a name to live, but thou art dead. " A man departing this life, loaded with the sins of his youth, a soul taking its flight into eternity, who does not know the Saviour, who has
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never received its pardon, who does not know its name is written in heaven, but has madly gone on in the world, and slighted the precious blood and merits of Jesus Christ, or foolishly contented itself with being strictly honest, and having lived a moral life in the sight of men, such a one can taste of death, such a one can feel horrors and distress unspeakable; and when the death-sweat is upon them, when their limbs are growing cold and benumbed; and the eye-strings breaking, and no friend can comfort them more; when they must go, and feel they are without Christ and his righteousness, and are now not worthy to be with him, O such die, such feel the pangs of death, the sting of the king of terrors, through the fear of which all the world have been subject to bondage. Every man by nature lies in this death, and is not sensible of it till awakened by the voice of the Son of man, till the Holy Spirit, through the preaching of the gospel, awakes those who sleep, and leads them to Jesus Christ, who can alone give them life; or as himself expresses it, "The dead shall hear the voice of the Son of Man, and they that hear shall live." And this is not spoken of the last or general resurrection, but of a work wrought in the heart in this world; because he saith, in the same place, "The hour is coming, and now is, when this shall be done." At the sepulchre of Lazarus he preaches thus, "I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me shall live, though he were dead." And again the scripture saith, "Blessed are those who have a part in this resurrection, the second death shall have no power over them. They shall never die." But let a man venture into eternity carelessly, and experience nothing of this; let a soul dare go to another world, depending on his
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own righteousness, or die without having in the heart the witness of God's Spirit, with his spirit, that he is a child of God, or without feeling and knowing that our Saviour has given him life; and such an one shall find there is somewhat true in our having died in Adam; and forasmuch as he did not come to our Saviour, that he might live, he shall not save his soul alive; he shall die, he shall see death, and tremble, do what he will. Do not then put these things far from thee: Do not say, as Felix did once to Paul, when his doctrine made him shudder and quake, "Go thy way, for this time, when I have a convenient season I will call for thee." O rather go into thy closet, and shut the door after thee, and hold an affize in thy own breast. Ask thy heart, Am I ready for my change? Have I not indeed lived without Christ in the world? Is not my heart yet dead to God, and cold as ice to the dying of Jesus, and to his bleeding wounds? O let nothing be so weighty a matter to you as this! Let nothing be so much your desire as to get eternal life through Jesus Christ! Look up to him, and speak to that dear crucified Lamb; he will hear you, and make you feel that his death has destroyed death, and brought you from the dead to live with him in time and eternity.

But this brings me to speak of that way in which we escape the tasting of death, and that is by keeping our Saviour's word: "If a man keep my sayings, he shall never see death." To keep our Saviour's sayings is, properly, to believe them, to embrace his promises, and hold them as the most precious treasure; that when in the world the blessings of our Saviour are questioned by wicked men, you may depend upon his promises, and hold

hold fast his word; and at the loss of all things keep it as the true sayings of God. When men, who love not our Lord Christ, speak lightly of his scriptures, do you let them be weightier to you than all the arguments of reasoning men; and let Jesus Christ's answers to satan, in the days of his temptation, be your answer in such cases: say, "It is written." Therefore I believe, and upon this will I venture body and soul. But a child of God can say more: He has not only looked upon the writings of the prophets and apostles, as sacred and inspired; he can say, I believe and know. For that faith whereby we keep the sayings of our Saviour has, in its own nature, the assurance and knowledge of the thing believed. "Faith is the evidence of things unseen." And our Saviour says, "If a man keep my word, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God." The Holy Ghost writes it so upon the heart, gives such an inward and comfortable confidence of the truth of it, that whoever keeps his word, sees the glory of God, is made free, has our Saviour manifested to him, overcomes satan and the world, and gets everlasting life in his heart. All these are scriptural truths, and have had in all ages multitudes of witnesses who have suffered martyrdom, or died in faith, as good soldiers upon their beds, assured that they had already laid hold on eternal life, and escaped death. Do thou, as Mary did, lay up all the words of the Son of God in thy heart, and let them be dearer to thee than thousands of gold or silver; a lanthorn to thy feet and a light to thy paths.

A man, who superficially views this text, may reason thus, as the Jews once did, "Is not Abraham dead? And Moses and the prophets, are they not dead?" Do we not see the good as well as the

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bad die? how then can it be true, that he that keeps the Lord's sayings shall not taste of death? To this I answer, it is true, Abraham, Moses, and the prophets, as well as an innumerable company of the first-born, are now departed this life, and are returned to dust, but they did not die, they are not dead, they have not tasted death. When kings, proconsuls, and persecutors, saw the exit of the martyrs, heard them sing in their flames, beheld them meet the torments with the greatest heroism and bravery, and undaunted smile at the sword, the wild beasts, or instruments of death, they could not help being amazed: and no man, no sage, no philosopher, can account for the joyful manner in which such have left the world, as well as millions of others, who in their life-time, and in their last moments, have supported the utmost trials, and held fast their confidence to the end, but by acknowledging our Saviour's promise, has been verified in them; they knew their sin, which is the sting of death, was taken away; they knew the High-Priest had absolved them, his dying had opened the happy passage for them. And thus blessed with his near presence, and persuaded of his everlasting love, they have panted to be gone; and rather than start at the approach of death, they have looked upon him as a messenger sent to tell them, "the Master calleth for you;" and have thought, like the mother of Sifera, "Why is his chariot so long in coming? Why tarry the wheels of his chariot?"

But there is one thing here which I must observe, and what seems to contradict all which have been said relating to that part of the text, "He shall not see death." And this is too in one of the sayings of the same blessed apostle and Doctor of our pro-

profession, Christ Jesus. After he had so often said, a believer shall not die, and wisely had called their departure out of the body, a sleep, a being returned to God, &c. he saith to John in the Revelations, "I have been dead:" But here is opened an adorable mystery indeed, he says, we shall not die, we shall not so much as taste death; but he says, "I am he which liveth and was dead;" as if he would say, I have drunk up your curse, I have felt the sting of death, and him that had the power of it, that is, the devil. I have tasted the bitterness of death, and gone through the dark valley of the shadow of death. I have experienced what death is. I have died in the strictest sense; the pangs of death compassed me about; the pains of hell gat hold upon me. I have endured the sharpness of death, when I opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers. A man must have thought very carelessly on the account of our Saviour's death, if he has not observed with what anguish he sunk down, with what shocking cries he poured out his soul, and especially when he uttered that amazing prayer, which makes even every drop of blood in one's veins tremble with awe when it is repeated! "My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me!" What must his dear heart have felt! What a cloud covered his soul! How properly did he taste death for every man, when he roared thus for the very disquietness of his heart! If at no other time, it may properly be said now, "He descended into hell." Then the same curse and death which a lost soul feels, our God and Lord felt; and the same misery, distress and vengeance which we had merited, burst upon him, and drank up his spirits; and thus, in the strictest sense, he has died for us. He has been dead to save his poor sheep from so great a plague; and

has by this means deserved the living and dead, and merited that blessed character, "The good Shepherd, who laid down his life for the Sheep."

However, the doctrine of our Saviour's so painful dying should melt the hardest heart, and make the most light-minded and trifling soul adore him with eyes overflowing with tears; yet, we see, it has had quite a contrary effect on many men, whose false wisdom have made them fools; or some have concluded from all this, that our Saviour was a mere man; and either like the Jews, thought he suffered justly; or, like Arians, dreamed he died only to shew us a good pattern, and was only a martyr for his doctrine. Far be such cursed thoughts from our hearts! He is certainly God over all: "He live and was dead, and is the Almighty, whose goings-forth have been of old, even from everlasting." And it is his being the eternal God, which has made his sufferings so meritorious and dear; "and hereby we perceive the love of God, because he laid down his life for us." When a certain deist, who read diligently how Jesus expired, and observed how his martyrs, in many ages, laid down their lives, and the Head dying with so much trembling and horror, and the disciples with so much courage, he blasphemously confessed, he could sooner trust the blood of one of the martyrs than the blood of Jesus Christ; for, said he, these died like men, and behaved courageously, and as heroes, but he died as a fool dieth, and behaved as if abandoned and forsaken, and like one in despair, and worse, so he ended his life. This has somewhat in it of truth, for he truly died in this frightful manner, with horrid groans and cries, while the martyrs and all true christians have gone unconcerned, or rather rejoicing to the stake, sung in their fires,

fires, leaped for joy at the place of execution, or departed in peace and assurance upon their beds: But the reason of this strange difference is this, Jesus died, bearing the sins of the world, the wrath of God, the rage and malice of satan; and for every man tasted death, loaded with our transgressions, and afflicted and accursed with all our iniquities and chastisement, as it is written, "he was made a curse for us." But, on the other hand, the martyrs and witnesses of Christ have had no such burden to bear, no death to taste, no hell or satan to be afraid of; and the feelings and knowledge of this, by the Holy Ghost, led them triumphantly through all torments and trials; and because their hearts experienced what the bitter death of their dear Master and Lord had effected upon them, they followed the Captain of their salvation through sufferings, and sung to him, "thou hast loved us, and saved us from our sins by thy blood." This gave the first witness such boldness, that when they were casting stones at him, without mercy, he saw by faith the heavens opened, and fell asleep, calling upon the Saviour, saying, "Lord Jesus receive my spirit!" This was no other than after the Hero had slain the enemy, his children could put their feet upon his neck and sing; or when one had robbed a serpent or dragon of his poison and sting, others come and handle it fearlessly; so the children and servants of God glory over death, and ask, "O death where is thy sting! O grave, where is thy victory!" but must bless that Lord who waded through, and made war and overcame, namely, he who gives them their victory, even our Lord Jesus Christ.

So that, properly, all our happiness, boldness, joy, comfort and assurance, is owing entirely and
solely

solely to the bitter and painful death of our Lord, God and Saviour upon the cross. This every true child of God is well convinced of; he knows what a miserable estate he was once in, and shunned death as a lioness robbed of her whelps. He cannot forget with what an aching heart his eyes were open to his own lost and corrupted estate, till the Holy Spirit directed him to Christ crucified; the very believing he died for him, and suffering that hell in his stead, eased his heart, and in the sweet streams of his blood, he got pardon, and an ease from all his pains and fears: So that with greatest certainty he can thank our Saviour for his bloody death; and rejoicing say, with David, I shall not die but live; or with St. Paul, "The life which I now live, is the life of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."

This is also the reason why now we in the christian church, in all our hymns and songs, mention only, and above all things, "The Lamb that was slain;" and like as Moses, David, Deborah, and others, taught the children of Israel to sing of their salvation from Egypt, Philistines, Assyrians, &c. and tell of it in their songs from one generation to another; so we, who have been redeemed by the blood and death of the Lamb of God, esteem his merits and sufferings alone worthy to be sung in all places, and believe all other deliverance were but shadows of this.

We behave as witnesses of his death and victory, and sing of his reproach and shame, his wounds and bonds, his cruel mocking and scourging, meekly suffering our chastisement and charges of our sin; and while others deride and disesteem him in his affliction, weakness and meanness, and salute him in scorn, we look upon him with the greatest reverence

rence and thankfulness, and think, how glorious did the King of Israel look! how red in his apparel! how beautiful in that form which was marred more than any man's, with the crown of thorns upon his head, the crown wherewith he was crowned in the day of his espousals! How brave, when he would not yield, but endured the cross, waded through hell, was stung to death by the king of terrors; and who, amidst all his torments and countless trials and sufferings, weathered out the storm, and having loved his own, loved them to the end, and put it beyond the power of pain, or death, or hell, or eternal wrath, to separate us from him. We sing how at last satan gave out, and his death abolished death, and the smoke of his torment ascending up and made an eternal atonement before the throne; from that moment the Captain of our salvation said, "It is finished," began in heaven the new song which we repeat with joyful hearts on earth, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive blessing and glory for ever; for he has saved our souls from death, our eyes from tears, and our feet from falling;" and hence we know, "we shall never die, death shall have no dominion over us."

These are the benefits of believing in Christ, and these are the common privileges of all the faithful in every land. Let these be then the mark of the prize of your high calling, nor account yourselves christians indeed, till you have received from heaven the blessed and comfortable knowledge, that you shall not die eternally; nor even, when you departing this mortal and troublesome life, taste that death which for your sakes Jesus Christ in our flesh has suffered for us. Do not let unbelief hinder you to see it your privilege, or keep you back from entering the possession of so valuable and divine a treasure,

sure, or check your most earnest prayers to him, who has the keys of hell and death, to grant it to you. He is God, and can save you; he is loving, and will do it; he is the very refuge and sanctuary for such as are ready to perish, and whose whole bleeding form preaches his grace. His head is bowed down to kiss you, his arms extended to embrace you, his wounds open, that, like a dove, you may turn in and dwell in those clefts of the rock and be safe. Arise, ye dear people, go into his wounds, live in his death, and go no more out. Search the scriptures with greater diligence than ever, and hold fast the blessed words of the Son of God. Believe then with all your hearts, and that blessing shall come upon you which is sent to the churches in the Revelations, "Because thou hast kept my word, I will keep thee." Let the sayings of Jesus be laid up in your hearts, and you shall be witnesses that "he who keeps his sayings shall not see death."

Now to Him that lives and was dead, and is alive again for evermore, even to Jesus the Son of God, be glory, to his Father, and the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever. Amen.

20 MA 59

F I N I S.

The Privilege of Believers.

BEING THE 4455. a 8
12
SUBSTANCE
OF A
DISCOURSE

DELIVERED AT
GROGUN, in the County of ANTRIM,
in IRELAND.

In the YEAR 1754.

By JOHN CENNICK. *K*

Now in Christ Jesus, ye who were some Time afar
off, are brought nigh by the Blood of Christ.
EPH. ii. 13.

It shall come to pass in the Place where it was said,
Ye are not my People; there shall they be called
The Children of the living God. ROM. ix. 26.

I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my Sons
and Daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. 2 COR.
vi. 18.

THE FIFTH EDITION.

L O N D O N:

Printed and sold by M. TRAPP, No. 1, Paternof-
ter-row, near Cheapside. 1791.



JOHN i. 12.

As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.

WHEN the due time was come, in which the God of Israel would be Immanuel and tabernacle with men, he came, according to the many prophecies, to his own people the family of Abraham, to whom, and to their fathers, he had been promised upwards of two thousand years, and for whose coming all the tribes had waited with great impatience and earnestness from the time of the departure of the sceptre from Judah, which happened not long before his appearance in the flesh; but whether his mean form, his low birth and estate in the world, or their being disappointed in their carnal expectation of his restoring the kingdom to Israel was the reason, or both together, it is certain his own people received him not. They were offended at him, and scorned to acknowledge him for the Messiah. His whole doctrine and manner of preaching was rejected by the far greater part of the Jews, who always had him in derision, and especially when he said he was the I AM, they openly blasphemed and rebelled against him. Thus they forsook the Rock that made them, and hid their faces from that Jehovah whom their fathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob saw, and who was worshipped by them and their children through many generations, and who was not ashamed to be called their God.

Some, however, even of this sinful and adulterous people, waited for the day of his coming;

and they, like Abraham, saw it and were glad. Among these were Zacharias and Elizabeth, the virgin Mary, Simeon, Joseph of Arimathea, and Anna the prophetess. They knew when Augustus Cæsar laid the tax upon the Jews as well as others, the sceptre was entirely gone from Judah and a lawgiver from between his feet, and believed the Shiloh must be come; and as they were led by the Holy Spirit to look for him, his extreme poverty, meanness, and despicable appearance in the world did not stumble them. They believed on him, blessed God that their eyes had seen his salvation, and spake of him to all that looked for redemption in Israel; to these, as well as to that happy few who in those times received him and all who have since believed on his name, he has granted the privilege or power of becoming sons of God, while all, who receive him not, miss this great blessing, and suffer loss eternally.

From the days of God's being first manifested in the flesh to this time, he is preached in the world, and now, as well as formerly, many received him not. Some stand aloof and hear concerning his redemption, but are in no immediate want, and let him go unconcernedly. He knocks indeed at the door of their hearts, but they are like the inns in Bethlehem, there is no room for him there; the pleasures of this life, the deceits of honours, friends and riches supply his place, and they receive him not. Others, like the proud children of Israel, scorn to submit to him, and with Jewish haughtiness despise his Godhead, and wantonly and presumptuously, like the Gentile and Heathen nations, are resolved not to have this man to reign over them, or to acknowledge for their Lord a Man who suffered death upon a cross between two thieves. But yet there are some who still receive
Jesus

Jesus with open and glad hearts, and who inherit the adoption of sons, and are numbered with his friends, and counted to the Lord for a generation. These in general are the poor in spirit, souls who were ready to perish, lost sheep, miserable and unhappy persons, and such as were self-spoiled and ruined, together with such as had sincerely sought after righteousness by works under the law, and who, weary and almost in despair at finding they failed, were ready to conclude themselves without hope; these, when Christ has been preached to them, or when the Holy Ghost has glorified the loving Saviour in their sight, like Zaccheus, have gladly received him, and so commenced his children, his sons and daughters.

To receive Christ implies not only a concession to the doctrine of the creed, or assenting to the truth and validity of the scriptures, or the acknowledging him to be the Lord, the Messiah and Christ that should come into the world, and so choosing to be called by his name, and blame Jews and Deists who are of another mind, but to receive him, is to accept of him as he is offered and preached in the scriptures as our Lord God, our only Saviour, our righteousness, wisdom, holiness and redemption. It is a closing in with him in his New Testament; he becomes a Father to us, and we become his children; he is our God, and we are his people; our Shepherd, and we are his sheep; our Husband, and we are his rib, his sister, his spouse and wife; yea, it is receiving of him into our hearts by his Spirit, we let in him that stands at the door and knocks, and he sups with us, gives us a foretaste and pledge of the marriage-feast, the earnest that we shall sup with him there forever. This cannot be learnt in theory. It is no matter for the sensual and natural man, he cannot understand

stand it. In this matter, no worldly wisdom helps or avails, no large capacity, no depth of thought is of use, but an honest heart, who day and night thirsts for salvation and grasps after Jesus as a hart for the water and as a dry land for refreshing rain, and who learns it of the Holy Ghost within. There he brings the news, and makes them to understand this wisdom secretly. He speaks in the soft still voice, Open thy heart; open the everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in." "Open, my love, my dove, and I will come in," Jesus says; and where he is manifested, there is his reward with him; his Father also comes and makes his abode there; and the chaste and new-washed temple of the body becomes the house of God.

The receiving Christ is a thing wholly for the heart, and is known only by experience. It is the common privilege of all the faithful, every believer in Jesus knows this precious benefit of having received the Lord; and whoever does not know he hath found the Saviour, he is no true Christian. As many as believe in his name, have him in them. He dwells with them; he is their new and eternal life, as it is written, "He that hath the Son, hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God, hath not life." St. Paul says, "Now the life which I live in the flesh, is the life of the Son of God. It is not I that live; it is Christ that liveth in me."

When one of the martyrs was advised to have God before his eyes, when he was near his execution, he answered cheerfully, 'I have him in my heart.' This is what I mean, and what the Holy Ghost means in the text, for such and such only are of his family who receive him. Others, whether they are professors or profane, live without Christ in the world.

Our Saviour never intended, when he was taken up bodily into heaven, to leave his disciples orphans and desolate upon earth, he promised certainly to be with them and in them, and not only would so appear to them who were then his followers, and let them see and enjoy him, that they should find he had not left them comfortless, but he made the same promise to their generations and children then unborn when he said, "If any man love me, I will come to him and manifest myself to him; I will bring my Father, and we will come and make our abode with him." Again, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, &c." All who believe on him, find his words true and faithful; they are his witnesses that he has fulfilled his promise, and happily experience that he is come with salvation to them; and the high and lofty one, who inhabits eternity and who dwells in the high and holy place, vouchsafes to dwell with them. But the receivers of Christ, or such as believe on him, are not only thus honoured; they not only receive the Lamb of God into their houses; the King of saints, the God of heaven and earth does not only condescend to make their bodies his temple, but they receive with him remission of sins, deliverance from hell, death and the law; beside they have power to become sons of God, or the privilege to call the Father of Jesus Our Father, and he is pleased to adopt them for children, and to call them My sons and daughters. This is that doctrine so often repeated even in the Old-Testament times, as well as by the apostles of our Saviour and by our Lord himself.

In the New-Testament writings servants of God are clearly distinguished from sons, for indeed there is a great difference between them. A son
or

or child of God may be a servant, he may over and above his sonship be employed in the Redeemer's work and labour in his vineyard, as the apostles and other ministers of Christ have done; but their hope was not that they had been servants or prospered in the work of their Master, nor did their safety consist therein, but in being made children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. When the disciples once returned from their labour of preaching and working miracles, &c. in the name of their Master, they told him with a sort of joy how well they had succeeded, and how even satan was subject to their word; but Jesus answered them, "Notwithstanding rejoice not in this, but rather rejoice that your names are written in heaven;" and at another time he told them, "I have not called you servants, but friends." Again, "A servant abideth not in the house alway, but a son abideth alway;" so when he sent Magdalene to tell them he was risen, he says, "Go tell my brethren that I go to my Father and to your Father, &c." He had often done after this manner in the days of his flesh; he taught them in their prayers to call God their Father; "when ye pray, say, Our Father, &c." Again, "Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Again, "Your heavenly Father will give his Holy Spirit to them that ask him." This is what David, Isaiah, Ezekiel and Jeremiah had foreseen so long ago when they said, "Thou shalt call me, my Father." And that name was known among the prophets some hundreds of years before the New-Testament was of force, and they taught the people how the Redeemer would bring the souls strayed afar off, and such who had forfeited their right to the kingdom, into the nearest fellowship and kindred with God, that he would be
their

their Father, and vouchsafe to call them my children. This is now come to pass and effected through the death and bloodshedding of the Lamb. We who were afar off by wicked works, and who could not have claimed the benefits of the family of Abraham, for he was not our Father and Israel acknowledged us not as children, are now adopted by faith into the family and household of God. We are sons, and have received the power to call God Father; we have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry Abba Father. This is the glorious liberty of the children of God, and is the highest and most desirable privilege that can be attained.

It was formerly the name and character of the saints, and they were called so of the Lord, Servants of God, they served the Lord in their generation, but it is not so much used in the gospel, because Jesus, who was Lord of all and the only begotten Son of God, has taken the servant's place and done all the work worthy to be mentioned, and, by way of eminence, is called of God, "My righteous Servant." All our services are nothing in comparison with his, and not worthy to be named. He has made peace; he has bruised the serpent's head; he has sweat blood, and opened a fountain for sin; he has undergone the chastisement of his people, obtained their pardon, and wrought out with cries and tears a perfect righteousness, and made, in offering up his body on the tree, a full, compleat and sufficient atonement for sin, disannulled the old covenant, abolished death, removed the curse, and carried away the iniquity of us all. He is only worthy of the name Servant of God, and deserves and merits above all to be accepted for his work's sake, by which we are made righteous and justified. But here it must be observed, how superficial their Christianity,

tianity is, who imagine they are in a safe estate, and in a fair way of going to heaven, because they do good works, as they say, and serve God. Such must be told, If you go no farther, ye are not safe, you are yet under the law, and have no hope but the hope of a Jew, and one who expects his works and duties will entitle him to the favour of Almighty God, and bring him to the reward of eternal life. O let the ministers of our Saviour endeavour to undeceive such people; let them make their righteousness appear as it is, a cobweb, a garment of fig-leaves and filthy rags, and make mention of Christ's righteousness and his only.

Are any so shallow and thoughtless in religious matters as to imagine their alms will purchase heaven, their tears wash out sin, their imperfect and slight obedience be accepted, and get the kingdom for a reward? O no! you who think so, trample upon the blood of Jesus, and slight the great price he paid for your ransom. Nothing less than the blood, the precious heart's blood of God's only Son, his many thousands of tears, and his sweat in the garden, can wash out sin and quench the divine wrath. No price less than himself ransomed us out of satan's bands, his whole life's obedience, his sore afflictions, his faithfulness in his temptations, his painful death and his anguish and torments bought heaven for us, and his many years of sufferings alone made satisfaction, and recovered us out of our enemy's hands. Be ashamed and blush then, ye who have boasted of what ye have done; be greatly ashamed that ye have done no more to his honour, and so much to grieve him. Think what sin have you obliterated and cancelled? what iniquity have you purged away with all your doings? Put all you have done together, and all the works and merits
of

of men and angels, and it would not avail you; if you receive not Christ into your hearts, ye are only servants; and for the least of your disobedience, you may be sent in strict justice to hell after all.

Herein then a servant is different from a son of God. A man may have lived a strict life, done much good and observed the law, been zealous, a promoter of piety; he may have prayed often and long, given away much to the poor, and did all in his power to please and serve God; but then if he has no more, he is not a Christian; a Turk, a Jew, a Heathen may go thus far. And St. Paul and Cornelius did all this when they were without our Saviour, and aliens to the commonwealth of Israel, and needed conversion to make them safe. All the promises in the law were temporal, and the rewards preached to such as lived strictly under the covenant of works were entirely such as related to this life, but God never promised to make men his children on any account but thro' faith, that the divine favour might be of free grace, unmerited and undeserved love. If a man should serve his master quite faithfully, do all all that he was commanded, and not wrong him in any thing, not squander away nor embezzle his goods, but be trusty to the last degree; work day and night, and fail in no respect of his service, could he therefore expect his master would make him his son, and adopt him his heir to all he had? or could he think he had merited so much? would not his wages and full hire be his just reward? In like manner Jesus says, "When ye have done all that is commanded, say, We are unprofitable servants, we have done no more than our duty." I wish only all who argue and dispute so much for their works could say, they had done all that

was commanded them; but even then it would be presumption to suppose they had a right to heaven and to be of the Lord's family. All who serve God shall meet with their due reward; but as it was never promised, so they cannot enter the kingdom by their works, nor stay in the house of God alway; but as Hagar and Ishmael were turned out of Abraham's house as bondservants, so shall all who proudly have thought by their merits to get salvation: they are servants and not sons. Satan and all wicked men are more or less servants of God. When God bid the destroying angel kill the first-born in every family in Egypt, but touch not one where the blood was on the door-posts, he obeyed strictly. When he gave satan leave to afflict Job and touch all he had, only not to hurt his life, he was punctual and went no farther than his commission; so it was in the matter of deceiving the prophets of Ahab, but it was an obedience of dread and fear, it was servile and not filial, so is the obedience of three parts of the world, they are overawed by the fears of death, the terrors of the law, and the looking for judgment, the dread of hell, and the wrath of God, makes them in some measure obedient, and restrains them from sinning; but all this is nothing. Their service is like the service of satan, it is done out of fear and of constraint, it is not the obedience of sons, and from the faith that works by love. They may carry it as far as they will, and go on till the last day with their striving and working, and plead it at the judgment when they have done, and say, "Lord, we have been called by thy name; we have eaten and drank in thy presence; we have cast out devils, and done many wonderful works in thy name;" and yet, if they have gone no farther, Jesus will answer them, "Depart from me, I never knew ye."

It

It is much otherwise with true believers; to them is the power given to be of near kin to the King of kings; they have the privilege to be sons of God. This honour and unspeakable happiness is given to those who receive Jesus in the world. This is conferred upon all freely, and only for Jesus's sake, and is obtained by all who believe in his name. God is so well pleased with his Son's free-will offering, so satisfied with his death and obedience, that, for a reward for his sufferings, he has given him all believers, who shall be his brethren and children of his Father. God therefore so glorifies and honours his crucified Child, that whosoever in the world shall believe in him, shall, by his means, be saved, and numbered with the saints and with the sons of God in glory everlasting. This serves to exalt our Saviour and his merits, whereby is known how precious and dear his sufferings are in the sight of the Godhead, since whoever rests thereon and is thereon resolved to venture all forever, is made forever happy. The obedience in which he trusts, the blood in which he believes, and the righteousness to which he looks, has deserved for him a greater happiness than to have been made an angel or lord of ten worlds. He has the privilege to become a son of God, to be a younger brother to Jesus Christ, a near relation to his Creator and Saviour.

This should be the aim of all enquiring and seeking souls; this should be the mark of the prize of their high calling. They are not invited by the gospel merely to escape hell, or to fly the wrath to come, or to be made again a little lower than the angels, to be crowned with glory and worship, nor even to be reckoned with the chiefest of the principalities, or to be raised to be on a level

level with the highest seraphims, but to be children of our Lord God, to be in the family and co-heirs with Christ Jesus, to sit at his table, to be his brethren and sisters; and this honour have all his saints.

Men who have received this privilege and embraced this glorious offer, though they are not brought into the possession of so great mercies, by means of their righteousness or merits; and though they have not the least dependence on their works, nor would suffer that thought which would so rob Jesus of his honour, but are in a readiness to revenge every such theft, and to lay all glorying in the dust, and ascribe to his praise all their salvation; yet are constantly employed to his glory, and out of love to him live good lives. His words are too dear to them to be neglected, and his commandments too precious to be despised or disesteemed. Out of the bottom of their hearts they are glad to serve the Lord Christ, and rejoice at every opportunity of doing any thing to please him; and this is not out of fear, not for reward, not to make a righteousness of it, or because they are not fully satisfied to depend wholly on the Lamb; but, as I said, it is out of pure love to Jesus, who has saved them, and brought them into his Father's household. It is their meat and drink to do his will; it is natural to them; and he who acts otherwise, be assured he has not seen God, neither known him.

A servant of God, or one who has been brought up in the church of God and served under the law, may for a time do well, be very exact and careful, be enlightened from above, taste with joy the good word of God, and run as if he meant sincerely to be saved; who after all perhaps rests
there,

there, or goes again back into a sinful life, and brings a blot upon all his services, "all his righteousness that he has done shall not be mentioned to him, in the sin that he has sinned in that shall he die, saith the Lord God" No state is therefore safe or secure, but the state of the children of God. It is above all things necessary that a sincere person make his calling and election sure; namely, that he is not content with having done much, or learnt or understood or comprehended much, but that he is sure Jesus is become his Saviour, and is now near to him as his brother, and as near as if he had sucked the breasts of his mother; that our Saviour's Father is his Father, and that he will not be ashamed to confess him as such, when he comes the latter day upon the earth. Then shall he say to such, "Come, ye blessed children of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." This grace is attainable; it is preached to all mankind; it is promised in all the prophets by our Saviour, and by all his apostles and evangelists, and may be entered by every upright soul. A greater favour cannot be. The benefit is exceeding great, the privilege inexpressible, but is surely granted to every believer in Christ Jesus, and is part of the commonwealth of Israel, the rights of the New-Testament, and what was the pure aim and intention of our dear Lord and Master, when he stooped to be the servant and minister of all, and when he paid our debts and died for us.

Since then all the scriptures preach this, let none seem to come short of it. Let not our Christianity be only the form, or without the happy enjoyment of this privilege, but let all look upon it as the free gift of grace, and what belongs

belongs to them and their children, and to all who believe in the name of Jesus, so let them seek it, so ask it of the Lord Christ, whose prerogative it is to bestow it, and they shall find, "that as many as receive Jesus, to them gives he power to become sons of God, even to as many as believe on his name."

Let the spirit of adoption only be given you, and all that is said of this divine matter by St. Paul to the Galatians will be clear and plain; you will know by experience what that means; "Thou art no more a servant but a son; we are not children of the bond-woman, but of the free, namely, of Jerusalem above, who is the mother of us all. We are children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. Because ye are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, "Abba, Father."

May that merciful and gracious Lord, of whom it is said, "Who shall declare his generation?" make you of the number of his children, and of that race "who are born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God!" These shall be reckoned to the Son of man for a generation, and be named after him. These shall help to fill up the innumerable company of "children that shall be born to him as dew out of the womb of the morning." May you, my dear brethren, be found among them, and be entitled to this grace to your soul's comfort in this life, and to your eternal joy hereafter! Amen.

20 MA 59

F I N I S.

The Patterns of Mercy. 4455. a 8
13

BEING THE
SUBSTANCE
OF A
DISCOURSE

DELIVERED AT
BALLINDERRY in the County of
ANTRIM, in IRELAND.

In the YEAR 1754.

By JOHN CENNICK. *K*

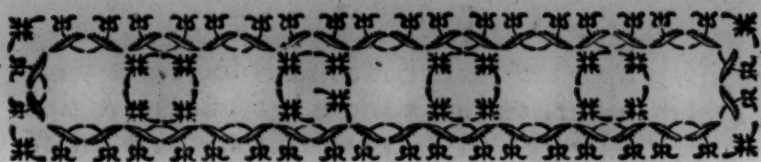
THE FIFTH EDITION.

That through your Mercy they also may obtain
Mercy." ROM. xi. 31.

L O N D O N:

Printed and sold by M. TRAPP, No. 1, Paternof-
ter-row, near Cheapfide. 1791.





I TIM. XV. 16.

This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief; howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to everlasting life.

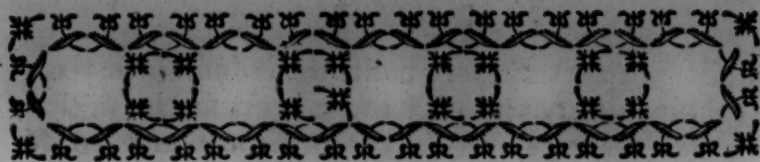
IN St. Paul's epistle to Timothy, wherein he represents the great doctrines of godliness, as became a person in his high office and place of trust, and which he delivers now into his successor's care to keep for Christ's sake, he several times speaks after this manner: "This is a faithful saying, &c." and this was not done as if any part of the scriptures or this his charge were of less authority or truth, but as Moses often renewed his message and errand to the Israelites with, "All these words the Lord thy God commanded;" or, as the prophets very often repeated, "Thus saith the Lord;" and Jesus himself, when he delivered doctrines of the utmost importance and things necessary to our eternal happiness, generally began with, "Verily, verily, I say unto you." Thus does the apostle in the text, when he writes to another great minister of Christ, and indeed all who labour in God's vineyard, that with boldness and courage they



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might propagate such confirmed doctrines with all their might, and give more heed to the divine charges delivered in so extraordinary and in so solemn a manner.

The time will not allow me to speak of the many blessed doctrines handed down to us in this way. I shall therefore speak chiefly of this main doctrine of the apostle, and upon which all the hopes of poor men are grounded, namely, our Saviour's coming from heaven into the world to save sinners. "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners." This doctrine is properly the substance of the whole gospel, and is every where taught us in the New Testament, both from our Lord himself and by all who heard him, and were sent by him to bear the glad tidings, through the earth, to every land and nation, and to invite and beseech sinners to be reconciled to God, and come back to Jesus the Shepherd and Bishop of their souls, that they might be saved. This (however slighted by so many, and though by some even scorned and despised, especially by all the opposers of salvation by grace alone) is yet a true doctrine, and worth their hearing and believing, it is worthy the acceptance of all men.

If an offer of life and pardon could be made to rebels in distress and chains, or if the news of liberty and redemption should be brought to the slaves in the gallies, or such as spend their melancholy days in prison or banishment, or should the most wretched and poor person in the world be offered a full receipt from all his creditors, and a fine estate besides for the longest term, all would think the offers worthy of their acceptance, and leap for joy at the good news; but should the
news

news of liberty come to his ears who thinks himself in no danger, or should the tidings of a general release be sent to freemen, or bread be brought to the exceeding rich, and to such as fare delicately every day, it would have no such effect, and it is no other than a false conclusion of their being safe, good enough, not fallen from God, or so desperately wicked and in danger of perishing as they really are, that makes the gospel to be heard so coldly and indifferently by more than half the world. Could a preacher tell his auditors where every one should find treasure hid, or how they might ensure to themselves a vast fortune, or could he teach them how to free themselves of every pain and sickness at once, and in what way they could be immensely rich, O how would people flock to hear him! there would be scarce room for the concourse any where, and he would not be able to make his voice reach to the least part of his hearers; but when a messenger of the King of saints comes and brings the news of the kingdom of God opened, and preaches free grace, redemption from death and hell, eternal life, and all the blessings of the world to come, into which all should press eagerly, how coldly is he heard? When he speaks of "the treasure hid in the field," how few believe the report? And when he declares how near our Saviour is to justify and help the sinner, how willing he is to pardon all sin, and to come with his Father into them and there make his abode, how very few open the door and look for him? and in how exceeding few is "the arm of the Lord revealed?" The enemy of souls, the god of this world, succeeds amazingly even in christian countries, in keeping men ignorant of Jesus and his love to sinners; and when his divinity is only slightly
 confessed,

confessed, and his eternal redemption considered but superficially and at a distance, it is no wonder that the blessed news is so indifferently entertained.

When Jesus entered Simon the Pharisee's house, he got no kifs, no hearty welcome, no water to wash his feet, no oil for his head, no incense burnt before him, and no precious ointment perfumed his chamber, the reason was, he did not know his guest, he did not feel how much he wanted a Saviour; but the sinner, the harlot Mary, who was called by him out of her sins and invited to the kingdom of heaven, thought she could never make enough of the Lord, she embraced his feet, kissed them, washed them with tears, and broke her alabaster box of spikenard upon them, and loved much. Thus is it now, while men deceive themselves and fancy they are good churchmen, pious and religious enough, and that there is no danger of their future state; there a few prayers, a little alms or some acts of self-denial and mortification lull to sleep the stirring conscience, and make the poor heart at peace without Christ. To such, as well as to the wanton, the profane, the worldling, the resolutely wicked and lover of pleasure, the gospel of salvation seems unworthy their acceptance, and is neglected to the very last; but an awakened soul, a man who feels his own sinfulness as an intolerable burden and who wants to be saved, but trembles at the word of God, has many fears about his condition, &c. he hears that God our Saviour came from heaven, out of mere pity and compassion, to save undone souls, to help poor people and to undertake for them and be their Saviour, and this is the best news to such an heart. Deep humility and a solid conviction and consciousness of his sin and whole corrupted nature, makes

makes him only willing to know, if Jesus can receive such a wretch as he has been ? And when he can be persuaded of this, O how entirely does he leave all his old and darling sins ! With what joy does he receive our Saviour's offer of forgiveness, and is glad in his salvation ! His heart leaps and bounds in him for joy when the Holy Spirit within whispers the word of reconciliation ; and then he thinks upon inviting others to the same grace, and is ready every where to tell how worthy of all men's acceptation this good doctrine is, that " Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom (he thinks) he is chief."

It is indeed a glorious gospel ; it is a privilege bestowed upon men beyond all hopes and wishes, and which makes all who accept it happy and blessed forever ; and all who slight or reject or delay the closing in with so gracious an offer, thereby make themselves of all men the most miserable. But then who is Jesus that is coming into the world that is of such importance ? He is the eternal God ! he is that Lord, that Creator and divine Being, against whom all had sinned, and who out of tender mercy to the world came from his throne and majesty, and was incarnate, a man, a servant, and whose whole painful life, sorrowful and shameful death, was endured by him with this sole and pure view, to save sinners. He had no design but singly and entirely to help them out of their condemnation and slavery, and to bring them in peace back to him. He would have been glorious and high the same, if we had been left in our guilt and suffered hell eternally ; but as he loved all his works and chose not the death of a sinner, and as he knew hell was not made for man but for the devil and his angels, he pitied us when we were sunk

sunk into their ruin and come under their judgment, and before all his innumerable company of angels and blessed spirits resolved to be their Saviour. This Jesus has now brought them out of the hand of the enemy; all souls are now his; the soul of the father and the souls of the children they are his purchased possession, and he has, on their account, made a perfect amends, atonement and satisfaction in his heavenly Father's sight; he has prepared an everlasting righteousness for them, and opened such a fountain in his own blood that washes out every sin and even the remembrance of them before God; and now has he ordained it as an everlasting gospel to be published and announced to every creature, that whoso in the world would be glad to be saved, and who sincerely wants mercy and salvation, may come to him and have it. The worst and most undeserving, even the rebellious, are invited to this happiness as to a feast; and this gospel, these true sayings, are worthy of all acceptance, since it comes from God Almighty, and as a gift worthy only of that Giver who is the author and cause of eternal life, and who hereby gives the best gifts he can give, namely, himself, his kingdom, his Spirit, his blood, body and righteousness, and whatever is able to make us completely happy and perfect. Many, yes many, as the stars in number, have been witnesses of this grace, and now reap the great salvation, the fruit of the Lord's toil and servitude for their sakes.

Lest satan should suggest to an honest and well-meaning soul that his sins were too many, too great, or of too heinous a nature to be pardoned, Jesus, our kind and dear Saviour, has set forth examples of his mercy, and as it were chosen out from all classes of sinners the very vilest, and such

as were come to the height of danger, and these he has graciously saved, as patterns to them which should hereafter believe on him to everlasting life. St. Paul calls himself one of these and says, "I am the chief of sinners, but obtained mercy for this cause," and sets himself forth as a monument of free mercy. None can believe that in respect of outward gross sins he was chief, for he had been brought up in the most strict way; but he speaks in respect of his having, out of an unbelieving heart, despised and slighted Christ's meritorious death and righteousness, and in the manner of the Pharisee attempted to establish his own, and out of a false zeal persecuted the disciples and doctrine of Jesus. In this sense he calls himself the chief of sinners, i. e. one who has sinned above others, and whose crimes were of a scarlet dye, and who had given out Saviour and his Spirit so much trouble to conquer and subdue him to the faith.

All truly awakened souls think with the apostle thus, and whether their lives have been notoriously vile in men's eyes or not, they feel too deeply their sin to extenuate or lessen it; they can easily excuse others, but themselves they condemn and loath in dust and ashes, and, like Jeremiah and St. James, confess, "the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked;" and is to encourage such to hope for mercy and draw near to Jesus, that he has exhibited and shewn forth so many instances of his mercy and compassion in the scriptures, who, as St. Paul calls them, are patterns, examples and monuments of mercy, and pillars in the temple of God. Of these there are five eminent in the gospel, and who seem to be the chief of every rank of sinners; the account

of whose conversions and mercies are written for our sakes, that we, who want mercy, may obtain it through their mercy, and venture to come boldly to the throne of grace by their example. The five whom I shall mention are, Mary Magdalene, Zaccheus, the thief who was crucified with our Saviour, Cornelius, and St. Paul; of all these I will speak freely, and first of Mary Magdalene.

This poor woman was taken from the head of the unclean and incontinent: she had been a known sinner, a public harlot and adulteress. It is likely she had been the ruin of many, and seduced them at first into sin; her whorish heart had made her sevenfold the child of the devil, who no doubt thought surely to have her; lust and impurity ruled her and led her captive; her shame was her boast, and perhaps her polluted body was hastening to the grave through her intemperate and unchaste life, while her wretched soul was ready to perish forever. In this state was Mary when Jesus came seeking the lost, and preaching the gospel of repentance and remission of sins, and called her out of her slavery and danger. Some of the first christians say that our Saviour had been preaching on the shepherd who lost the ninety and nine in the wilderness to seek the one lamb that he had lost. It was however on that day Jesus dined with Simon that she was converted. She followed him into the house weeping; her haughty looks were humbled, her brazen and impudent face washed with hundreds of tears, and she, who before could appear boldly before all the world and on purpose entered company with her eyes full of adultery and darting her fire on all sides, now crept behind and kneeled at Jesu's feet, like Eve and her guilty and naked husband when they heard the voice

voice of the Lord God, in the cool of the day, in Paradise. O come hither, ye lecherous and debauched livers, ye whoremongers and harlots, ye whose beds and bodies have been defiled like Magdalen, look upon her, see those lips which uttered such obscenity, trembling, kissing the Lord's feet; see her hair, once curled and platted to entice men to sin with her, now hiding her blushing face and wiping her tears away as fast as they fell upon his feet. With all her fine cloaths, her splendid vail, her seducing attire and ornaments, she sinks in the dust before our Saviour, and makes tears and sighs speak the language of her heart. Come, O come and do likewise! Do not think, I dare not, I may not; my sins are too many; my secret crimes and pollutions are too predominant and render me unfit to pray, unfit to hope for mercy, since she is set forth as a pattern to those of her class who repent and believe in Jesus. Think, O think where she is now; yonder she sits at Jesus Christ's feet a pure virgin in heaven; our Saviour had mercy upon her, and said, before Simon the Pharisee and all those who sat at meat with him, "Thy sins that are many are forgiven thee, go in peace." At once she found her soul redeemed; the enemy, her master, lost his hold, while God, her Saviour, spake her clean. This was the woman who afterwards loved Jesus so much; this was her that before the self-righteous Simon obtained mercy; this was she who had the honour to minister of her substance to Jesus, and to stand with the virgin Mary under the cross, and who first saw the Lord after he arose. He did not first appear to his mother, or to the twelve, or to his favourite John, but to her who before day was up and weeping alone, because she had missed her Lord. This was the first preacher of the re-

surrection, the highly-favoured person who got the first greeting from the risen Redeemer, and is sent by him to appoint the place where all the rest should meet him. I dare say, no spotless maiden now shines brighter round the throne, or more loves and adores the Lamb ! All her fellow saints see her, and worship God because of the great mercy bestowed upon her. Lift up your eyes of faith, ye who have followed her in lusts, and see what a pattern of mercy she is for you ! see what the blood of Jesus has accomplished on that once wretched, but now happy woman ! A drop of Jesu's blood can make you clean, like her, and make the worst and most defiled chaste virgins in a moment. The blood of Jesus cleanseth from all sin ; and does not only damp the impure nature, prevent and extinguish wild and unholy fire, but eases the conscience, and washes away the remembrance of sin from before the Lord. O let this woman's mercy compel and encourage you apply to the same gracious Master, and you shall find that the history of Mary was written not for her sake only, but for your sakes also, to whom the same grace shall be imparted, if you believe on him. Let the sense of your disobedience and abominable deeds bow you down at his feet ; shed your tears there, and thence stir not till the same Lord who granted her eternal life, and made her so near and dear to him, vouchsafes you to hear, "thy sins are forgiven ;" I mean, till his Spirit has made it clear to your heart that all your sins are pardoned and done away in the blood of the Lamb, and your lusts and impurities killed and abolished in his cold sweat and tears. Since the chief of sinners is saved, venture you also and be saved freely, and experience that it "is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation,

tion, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners."

Zaccheus was another monument of grace; he perhaps had not gone on in Mary's course, but was a public sinner; he was chief of the publicans, and he was rich. The publicans were a sort of unconscionable men who farmed the taxes and tribute-money, and who had it in their power to use extortion and distress and oppress the poor; the strict part of the Jewish church held them anathema, and our Saviour and St. John rank them with harlots and the worst of men; but beside his being of this business, beside his being the chief of this clan, he was rich. He was in double danger, he was ungodly and without any religion, and he was rich. Our Saviour had said, how hard it was for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven. And if so, here was one rich and wicked too; all in Jericho knew the sinner Zaccheus. Come near, ye covetous, ye worldly-minded and miserable people, ye oppressors of the poor, and ye who are rich, though your danger is great and the obstacles in your way many, yet, if you are minded to be saved and want to see Jesus, behold Zaccheus is a pattern of mercy for you. See the man who without pity grinded the face of the poor, who stood like a flint unmoved at the cry of the widow and fatherless, who could distress the needy, and thrust into prison, threaten and oppress his tenants, and who got his gain with cruelty and extortion, who took barbarously the bread as it were from the orphans and hungry, and made many a child suffer want, while the parents wept bitterly unminded; behold the rich, who was in danger of crying out with Dives for a drop of water in vain forever, and of being one of that
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number who have their good things in this life, he has found pardon ! Jesus saw him in the sycamore-tree and hastened him down, that he might bring salvation to his house, for, saith he, " to-day I must abide with thee." O happy day ! O happy Zaccheus ! He that shewed no mercy when it was asked with tears and cries, finds mercy without so much as asking for it. This exalts the doctrine of free grace indeed, and makes Zaccheus a glorious pattern of mercy. He made haste and received Jesus into his house and into his heart, and had scarce received pardon and believed unto salvation, but his faith worked by love, and yielded the fruit of good works : " Behold, Lord, said he, I will give half of my goods to feed the poor, and where I have wronged any one by false accusation I will restore him fourfold." Thus it is where a true faith in Christ is, there are good works and a tenderheart immediately. No soul in Jericho could have received the Lord with so much joy as this man ; he had much forgiven him, and he loved much. If any who hear me would fain be saved, but, because you are rich, tremble, O take courage by the example of Zaccheus ; take our Saviour's advice, give alms, of such things as you have disperse abroad, give to the poor, and begin to be faithful stewards of the mammon of unrighteousness, and believe in him, and so shall you get treasure in heaven. Or are you afraid because of your former covetousness and search after riches ? Does the remembrance of your atheism, infidelity, carelessness in religious matters, oppression of the poor, hard behaviour to your inferiors, or want of tenderness and kindness to persons in necessity and who were in debt, in prison, and overwhelmed with penury, &c. bow you down and dishearten you ?

you? See Jesus Christ's compassion on Zaccheus! See the worst and most hardened of wretches has found mercy, the chief of the publicans is saved! O go, guilty and unworthy of pity as you are, stand before the merciful Jesus, shew him your public and atrocious crimes, your secret injustice and hidden offences, spread all open before him, and fall at the Judge's feet a self-condemned and guilty sinner; he came to save such; his bowels of compassion yearned over such. "It is a true saying, and worthy of your acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." Plead this and this alone, and stand only in Zaccheus's place with the same willing heart to see Jesus, with the same believing heart, and you shall find his mercy to all eternity.

The dying thief is another eminent pattern of mercy, and witness that Jesus came to save sinners. This man seemed hardened above measure, else he could not have joined with his other fellow-criminal in the insults and blasphemy of the multitude: his blood-guiltiness (for in all likelihood he had been a murderer), his robberies and thieving seemed to lie with small weight on his conscience; it appeared as if sin had seared it and made it obdurate and hard as the nether millstone; it was as if he had no thought of his danger, body or soul, but was springing headlong into eternal flames: while he joined the scoffers and mockers, how did our Saviour pity him? He saw how far Satan had prevailed and deluded his slave, and with strong cries and tears interceded for him and was heard; his petitions reached the ears of his almighty Father, and rebounded as it were to the thief's heart; he awaked at once out of his sleep, the infidel believes in Jesus and called him Lord;
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the blasphemer repented of his blasphemy and beseeches the King of Israel to think upon him when he should come into his kingdom. Surely all, even the vilest, must have wondered at his reprobate behaviour before, but above measure they must be astonished now to hear him sue to him for mercy, whom before he had so derided and despised, and as much all in heaven and earth must have wondered when Jesus gave him that sweet and merciful answer, "To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise." He was an open and public sinner, and as openly and publicly did the Lamb absolve, reconcile and save him: he took him home with him in peace, and from the very brink of hell, brought him to heaven. Here then look, ye poor rebels, ye thieves and most criminal and guilty men, ye unjust and wicked, behold Jesus made his death with the wicked, and stretched out his hands as if he meant to offer both the guilty partners in suffering, mercy. Look and see how the chief of felons, the chief of sinners, is saved! It is likely this man had lived an abandoned and debauched life, careless of God and his own poor soul, a lover of bad company, idle and wanton, till his crimes brought him to that shameful end. So far satan led him, and would have carried off his prey, had not a dear Saviour interposed and shewn mercy; but he did it so openly, that he might make him an example and pattern to those who should hereafter believe on him to everlasting life; also to give hope to such as turn to him on their death-beds, and who repent in their last hours; but it was especially to shew that he justifies the ungodly, and that even when an unjust, careless, or most profligate and bad person is disposed for eternal life, and wants to be saved, he may; let him apply to the

the Friend of publicans and sinners, to the Son of God, who came into the world to save sinners, he shall not perish, he shall be saved. Perhaps some may think, I have been unchaste and unclean with Mary, I have been covetous and hard-hearted with Zaccheus, and wicked, unjust, dishonest, and a liar, a swearer, a blasphemer with the thief, and what then? Should all their complicated crimes center in you, and you be guilty of all, and were even the sins of all the world upon you, Jesus is the Lamb that takes away the sin of the world: he is just such an almighty and tender-hearted Saviour as you want; and because he knew you were lost, perished and undone without him and could not recover, or by any other means get delivered from Satan and the wrath to come, therefore he came into the world to save you, and has set forth so many examples and patterns of mercy to encourage you to turn to him with all your hearts and be saved.

Cornelius the centurion at Cæsarea is another of these patterns, and of whom I must also speak a little. I will not reckon him of the sort of Mary, or number him with Zaccheus, or rank him with the malefactor, for it seems as if he was eminent in another way. He was certainly famous among the Roman heathen for bravery, since he was a centurion of the Italian band; and for piety, because he fasted, was devout, just, gave much alms, feared God, and prayed always: so far the light of nature and a tender conscience, helped by the morality of the doctors among the philosophers, had brought him, but he was still without Christ and unsafe; for could morality and his obedience to natural religion have saved him, the angel appeared to him in vain and sent him to hear

the gospel from St. Peter in vain, but he must hear the words of Peter, whereby he should be saved; and this is a clear proof that such err who think without our Saviour to get to heaven: but Cornelius is a pattern to all who look after mercy, and scarce know how. He was in his way a good man and wanted to be saved, and Jesus, whom he knew not, would not disappoint him; and to this day, whenever souls are sincere and honest in desiring salvation (let them be Turks, Jews, or Heathens, and seek it with wisdom or foolishly), they will find it; our Saviour, who revealed himself to Abraham when he was an heathen and blessed him, and who sent his angel to Cornelius, will find means to bring them to the knowledge of his gospel, and will send some to preach Jesus and his redemption to them. Their having lived, like Cornelius, without the benefit of revealed religion shall not hinder them to come to heaven; they shall hear the gospel and be saved; God shall send some faithful Peter to them, who shall preach Christ and his merits to their soul's health; or some book shall set forth that open door to them; or God, by his Holy Spirit, shall manifest his Son, and lead them to all the means of grace, and to the attaining perfect happiness and righteousness by Christ Jesus. In this respect therefore is Cornelius a pattern of mercy, in that, though he was not under the law of Moses, nor had the privilege of the Jews, when he wanted mercy God shewed him mercy; and when his moral obedience, universal benevolence, and strict observance of the laws of nature could not satisfy him, but he felt he lacked perfect righteousness, the angel of the Lord led him to hear of that Man, in whose name is preached forgiveness of sins; and he heard, believed,

lieved, was baptized, received the Holy Ghost, and is now safe with the innumerable company of the first-born in the kingdom of God.

The last that remains to be spoken of is St. Paul himself, who in the text styles himself the chief of sinners. He differed much from Cornelius, in that he was no heathen, nor called upon other gods, but was a strict Jew under the law; and as Cornelius sought righteousness without the law, ~~so~~ Paul sought it by the law, and profited in his religion exceedingly, being of the strictest sort in his church, and more zealous for the law and for the traditions of the fathers than many in Jerusalem; he was a person who carried the matter of righteousness, perhaps, farther than any one, was of the beloved tribe of Benjamin, the son of a devout and strict parent, circumcised the eighth day, lived in all good conscience, and as touching the law blameless; was in favour of the high-priest, the sanhedrim, and the elders; a disciple of Gamaliel; and indeed had all the advantages of education and religion, but knew not the righteousness of faith in Christ. This made him so angry with the christians; they preached Christ; they said, that that person who was executed on the cross, who died the cursed death, and was numbered with transgressors, was the Lord and Christ, through whose name only could be obtained remission of sins, and by faith in whom righteousness was imputed. All his education and good breeding did not hinder him, he joined the rude multitude to blaspheme such a doctrine which set at nought self-righteousness and a man's own holiness, and assisted at the killing of St. Stephen, keeping their cloaths who stoned him and consenting to his death, he banished

nished some, made others renounce our Saviour, got others scourged, and with all his might persecuted such as called upon the name of Jesus, scorning and despising his blood and merits, and trampling his atonement and righteousness under his feet; but lo! after all, our Saviour's grace overtakes him; and the self-righteous Saul, like a poor perishing criminal, continues day and night to pray, without eating or drinking, for mercy. He saw the necessity of a divine and better righteousness than his own; and when God had brought down his heart, stripped him of his fig-leaves, his beggarly raiment, and the righteousness of his works, then he pardoned him, and clothed him with his own righteousness, and justified the chief of sinners. Hear this, ye who have been of this sort, and valued so much your duties, piety, and alms, and thought so little of our Saviour and his death, like the apostle, deny all your own goodness, and come and trust the blood of Christ alone, and you shall be saved, though you have been lifted up, like Capernaum, as it were to heaven, and thanked God, with the Pharisee, that you were not so bad as the drunkards, the publicans and extortioners, and foolishly thought yourselves well off and in a good way, but who now, ashamed of your thoughts, and who blush at your spiritual pride, and even shudder to approach the Lamb you have so disesteemed, or to ask the righteousness you have slighted, or to implore the mercy you have despised; let the example of St. Paul encourage you to call upon the name of Jesus; and though your sin may appear to have been the chiefest of all sins, in that you have so long sought by other ways, and as it were by another door to get to heaven, and put
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up the idol of your own righteousness in the place of Christ, and dreamt that your obedience, charity and prayers could buy you eternal happiness, and your self-denial make an amends for sin, when nothing less than the dying of God's only Son could accomplish this. I say, though all your pride and vanity be a sore burden to you now, fear not, but wash away your sins, calling upon the name of the Lord. I know, if you are truly awakened, you must think yourselves the chief of sinners indeed, for you must feel how bad it is to slight our Saviour, and how much trouble he has had to make you truly religious, to submit to his righteousness, and yield to be saved by faith alone, freely.

I have now spoken of these five persons who have been eminent as patterns of mercy, and who were at the head of the principal classes of sinners. In one of these classes almost every one may find himself; but perhaps there may be some who think themselves guilty of all, and who are sensible of their unchaste deeds and impure nature, with Mary; like her, they have lived in pleasure and wantonness, rioted, feasted, and indulged their vicious and sensual appetites, lived at ease and in luxury, wasted their bodies and impaired their health with intemperance and debauched living, &c. like Zaccheus, they stand convicted of having used unlawful measures in securing to themselves riches, or find themselves guilty of covetousness, hardheartedness to the poor, oppression, cruelty and extortion, perjury and false-witness against the innocent, and the like; besides, they have sinned with the thief; have hated their brother, been murderers therefore before God, (1 John iii. 15.); passionate,
fond

fond of bad company, given to drink, careless and irreligious, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God, fond of games unfair and deceitful, unjust; and having deserved for secret crimes and black deeds to die, swearers, blasphemers, and, with all their bad and sinful life, tempted to imagine themselves christians, or satisfied their consciences that others were as bad, only hypocrites, and supposed indulging of their lusts and passions, &c. were not sins, since nature prompted them on; yea it is possible, amidst all manner of disobedience, to dream one is a good sociable person, a merry companion, that means no ill, not of the worst sort, but in many respects to be praised; and if at times such frequent church, give away a few alms, and refrain for a time from outward and gross crimes, they can cheat themselves, and hope they have made some progress in righteousness, &c.

If some should think I have been a sinner with all, and in a great measure am guilty with every class of sinners; yet let them so think, I have to deal with a God whose mercies are as his majesty, whose blood is almighty, and whose right hand saves to the uttermost. Only bow down at his feet, conscious of your being indeed the chief of sinners, and sue for pardon, and iniquity shall not be your ruin. Let your hearts repent unfeignedly, and with tears seek forgiveness at the foot of the cross, resolved, like Jacob, not to let the Lord go till he has blessed you with salvation, and you shall surely find it. The self-righteous spirits will find the hardest work to submit to Christ Jesus's free grace; but when they are heartily tired and weary with seeking happiness and perfection; they will be at last glad to sink
at

at Christ's feet, and ask it there as a poor sinner; but, as I said before, this costs the soul and the Saviour much before it is done.

I know by experience this: I was brought up strictly, taught religion from my childhood, and carried the matter of righteousness very far, and do believe solemnly that our Saviour has had more trouble in bending my poor heart to his free salvation and conquering my self-righteous spirit, than in saving some hundreds of sinners besides; but I have obtained mercy, and I set my seal to this true saying, "that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief." May you all happily experience the same mercy, to the glory of his grace, to whom be praise and salvation forever. Amen.

An H Y M N.

I.

O GOD, if thou hadst but abhorr'd
To wear our flesh and blood,
I never had approach'd the Lord,
But at a distance stood.

II.

A sense of my unworthiness,
My guilt and just desert,
Had kept me in the worst distress,
And sunk my hopeless heart.

III.

But since thou hast incarnate been,
And took the Saviour's place,
Only to save from hell and sin
The helpless human race;

IV. And

IV.

And since, by thee, a countless troop
Are now got safe to heav'n,
Who once were sinners, I have hope,
And pray to be forgiv'n.

V.

In heav'n above, in earth beneath,
Or in the pit below
There's none deserves the second death
More just than me, I know.

VI.

I know, in thought, in deed, and word,
I've put thy soul to grief :
I am the chief of sinners, Lord ;
I am of sinners chief !

VII.

My sins have made thy cross ; my guilt
Has caus'd thy wounds and pain ;
For me, unclean, thy blood was spilt,
By means of wicked men.

VIII.

But let a soul, redeem'd so dear,
Be precious in thy sight ;
Wash me, and sin shall disappear,
And be abolish'd quite.

IX.

In pard'ning one so vile as me,
Thy mercy shall be shewn ;
A monument I too shall be
Of mercy on thy throne.

20 MA 59

F I N I S.

The Vision of Dry Bones.

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14

BEING THE
SUBSTANCE
OF A
DISCOURSE

DELIVERED IN
D U B L I N,

In the YEAR 1754.

By J O H N C E N N I C K.

The hour is coming and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live. John v. 25.

He that believeth shall live though he was dead. John xi. 25.

THE FIFTH EDITION.

L O N D O N:

Printed and sold by H. TRAPP, No. 1, Paternoster-Row. 1789.

SUBSTANCE

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~~SECRET~~

EZEK. xxxvii. 14.

I will put my Spirit in you, and ye shall live.

WHOSOEVER reads the Bible must observe that God used similitudes, types, and parables when he spake by the prophets; many instances of this kind we find in Ezekiel especially, to whom, more than to other holy men, God delighted to manifest his mind in his way, and to shew visions.

At that time it was more necessary than now to liken and compare the case of the church, and of the kingdom of heaven to temporal things for their sakes who heard the word, because then the vail was upon the true sanctuary, and the doctrine of the fall, and of salvation by our Saviour's death, was not spoken of plainly, as since the New Testament has been of force.

Thus when the Lord would shew Jeremiah, that the same God who made the world would redeem it, he brings him to the house of a potter, and lets him see the potter finish his vessel upon the wheel, which was spoiled in his hands; and then he did not in his anger throw it away, and take a fresh piece of clay, but new moulded that which was marred, and made of it a good vessel, as it pleased him. Then came the word of God to the prophet, saying, "Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hands so are ye in my hands, saith the Lord." By this means we are taught, that God is the great potter, and we are his clay. When he made man, sin marred the vessel in his hands, but he would not cast us utterly aside,

nor withdraw his everlasting arms from underneath us; we were kept still in his hands, spoiled and ruined as we were, till the Creator bowed the heavens and came down in our likeness, and with his own blood he softens our hardened and spoiled nature, and begins in the new-birth a new creation, and this he carries on till all things are made new; and in that day when all old things pass away, and time shall be no longer, every soul shall know, that God who made all things, and for whose pleasure they are and were created, is author and Lord of all, and our Saviour.

In like manner, when the Lord would shew Ezekiel the estate of his church, he brought him in the spirit, and set him in a valley full of dry bones, and caused him to pass by them, and go round about and view them, and lo! "they were very many and very dry." When the man of God had been shewn all this in a vision, the Lord asked, to try him, "Can these bones live?" and he answered, "Lord thou knowest;" and the Lord said to him, "These bones are my people;" they are now in a low and dead estate, and they have no more hope that I will deliver them, than that the dry bones shall live, but I have spoken it, and I will perform it; I will open your graves and cause you to come up out of them, and I will bring you into the land of Israel; then shall ye know that I am the Lord, when I have brought ye up out of your graves, O my people, and shall put my Spirit in you, and ye shall live.

In this vision three things are typified, First, the deliverance of the captive Israelites. Secondly, the salvation from the dead state of nature by Christ. And, Thirdly, the last resurrection, which shall be effected through the same divine hand of our only "Lord Jesus, who can subdue all things to himself,"

himself," and raise up all that innumerable company who have slept in the graves, and who are now returned to dust, and scattered and dispersed far and near.

I shall not here speak of the temporal deliverances of Israel, nor of the resurrection, but of our lost and dead condition by nature, and of our salvation, and rising again to a new life, through the grace and Spirit of our Lord Jesus Christ. This I will do when I speak of the text more immediately, and now will make a few observations on the vision.

I look upon it as one of the liveliest similitudes in the scriptures, and from whence a minister and servant of Jesus may learn many excellent lessons, and indeed all others also who would be wise to salvation.

By the valley we may understand this lower world, and by the bones all the whole race of mankind; for such is our state since the fall, and dry bones can as soon understand the things of God as we by nature, and as dead and dry as the bones, and as unlikely to live, so are we, and shall never be otherwise but by an immediate work of almighty God.

Thus has the Holy One compared our state, and thus we are in his eyes, therefore he brings his servant to see a valley full of bones, and bids him walk round about, and go through, and observe them narrowly, and he says, "behold they were very dry."

When a true servant and minister of the gospel would describe the condition of lost mankind, he must so describe it, as dead and helpless, even as dry bones; and neither can he compare unregenerate men to any thing better, nor the societies of
christians

christians with all their best forms and orders, who enjoy not Christ in them; they, like all others, are dead, and like the house of Israel in Ezekiel's time.

When God asked Ezekiel if he thought the bones could live? he answered modestly, Lord, thou knowest; as if he would have said, to all outward appearance, and according to all human thoughts, they cannot live, but thou knowest, thou art God, and canst do what thou wilt in heaven and earth, to thee all things are possible. Should a minister, or any awakened soul, take a view of our natural state, make a narrow search into the depth of our misery and sinfulness; or be led by the Holy Ghost to see how far we are gone from God, and how sunk into the arms of satan, he would scarce make any other answer than this, Except Almighty God be their Saviour, except the Creator and Lord of all be their Saviour, they cannot be saved, they must die for ever. The scripture observes of the bones, that they were very dry, to signify the very barren and lifeless nature we are possessed of, and yet directs Ezekiel to prophecy or preach to them. Had he measured the word of God by the rules of human wisdom, or resolved, as too many ministers do, to believe and teach nothing but what they can comprehend, nor do any thing without being able to account for their manner of acting, reasonably, then he must have replied, Lord, to what purpose shall I preach to dead men and dry bones? But he did not do so, he behaved as an obedient child, and did as his heavenly Father bid him. Such ministers only does our Saviour use. For of what service is the vessel that is not passive? Or to what purpose are ministers sent to preach the word of God, who are determined to be led by their carnal reason,

reason, the philosophy of the schools, and the wisdom of men, since all the doctrines of Christ are against such, and teach us, that it was by such wisdom the world knew not God! A true minister of Jesus Christ believes his word, and teaches it, he follows his dear Master, and chuses rather his reproach, he bears the sneers and insults of cruel men, is content to be deemed a fool and mad, rather than please men and not be the servant of Christ.

Had any seen Ezekiel preaching to the bones, no doubt they had mocked and derided him. We know how we should have behaved once, if we had seen one calling to the dead in a church-yard or burying-ground, we should have pitied such a one, and thought he was beside himself, or laughed at his folly and credulity. Just so carnal men, who hear the doctrine of original sin, and how all are dead in Adam, and left powerless and unable to do any thing to the attaining salvation, mock and jeer the preachers who call to such to come to Christ; but let them mock on, our Saviour has sent us on the errand, and bids us preach to the dry bones, and we will do it. He will stand by us to the end of the world, and what we speak in the ear, he will write upon the heart. That minister would be to blame who could think it was his preaching, labours, or arguments which awakens souls, or inspires them with life: He might preach and pray till the day of judgement, and not win one soul to our Saviour of himself.

When the disciples had been fishing, and toiling, and rowing all night by themselves, they took nothing, all their labour was in vain: but when Jesus came to them and bid them cast their net into the sea, at his word they did so, and strait filled their
net

net that it was ready to break, and all their boats were full of fishes, so that they began to sink; so must such think who would be fishers of men. Dear Saviour, I know I may speak till I die, and toil in a dark night all my days, and catch nothing, but speak thou the word, be thou only with me, and vouchsafe to own my labours, do you give me my words and light, and lead and send me, and I shall prosper, else I beat the air, and deliver dead preaching to dead men, and they and I deceive our own souls.

Thus Moses, the meek prophet, when he was bid to go with the people, while God made as though he would not go, answered, "If thou goest not then will I not go." He knew he should lead them in vain, and be unprosperous in all he should undertake, without the good Shepherd's presence; but when his glory moved before the camp, then he could go cheerfully after; and when the Lord spoke to him he willingly told all the words before the people.

When we preach it must be so with us. Let us not rush into the ministry unsent, nor carelessly speak to the souls under our care, but be first well acquainted with our own hearts and with our Master, and when we have felt our own sad condition, and have found redemption in his blood and wounds; when we have been truly awakened, and have experienced our lost sinful state, and found Christ crucified, and obtained pardon of him, and lived in real fellowship with him, we may then speak boldly, preaching that we know, and testifying that we have seen; and as Moses spoke from the presence of Jehovah to the people, and all heard and felt the power of God, so shall it be with us who speak out of a warm heart, whereon our Saviour's blood has
spoke

spoke peace, the people who hear us shall feel whose word we speak, and know whose servants we are. Our gospel shall not come in words only but in power, in the Holy Ghost, in much assurance, and in faith unfeigned, while we, like sowers, go on and sow in season and out of season, not knowing if this or that may prosper, or as prophesying to dry bones, leaving it over to him that sent us to make them hear and live. Ministers who so act, and who so believe, learn to prize as an inestimable treasure, the Holy Scriptures, which are the words of God, and having been taught therein by the chief Minister, they shall not need to come barren or empty-handed to the congregation, but be like scribes instructed in the kingdom of God, who bring out of their treasures things new and old, to alarm, awaken, comfort, and encourage men till they have laid hold on eternal life, and entered into the harvest-supper, where the sowers and reapers rejoice together for ever.

But to return : As soon as Ezekiel had begun to preach, "there was a noise and a shaking among the bones, and the bones came together, every bone to his bone." As soon as a servant of our Saviour enters a land, or city, or house, and delivers with faithful simplicity the doctrine of Christ, immediately there is a noise. The souls that were dead in sin, and asleep in a lost and unsafe estate, awake and cry for mercy ; they sound the same solemn alarm in the ears of others, and a noise of weeping and mourning for him whom they have pierced, comes up before the throne.

There is also a noise in the world ; some when they have heard the gospel blaze it abroad far and near, and are for inviting and calling all to Jesus ; Thus it was with the woman of Samaria, she no

net that it was ready to break, and all their boats were full of fishes, so that they began to sink; so must such think who would be fishers of men. Dear Saviour, I know I may speak till I die, and toil in a dark night all my days, and catch nothing, but speak thou the word, be thou only with me, and vouchsafe to own my labours, do you give me my words and light, and lead and send me, and I shall prosper, else I beat the air, and deliver dead preaching to dead men, and they and I deceive our own souls.

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There is also a noise in the world ; some when they have heard the gospel blaze it abroad far and near, and are for inviting and calling all to Jesus : Thus it was with the woman of Samaria, she no

sooner found the Messiah, but runs to call all in Sychar of her townsmen and neighbours to come and see him. This often causes a stir in a city, or village, or family, and is the means God often uses to awake the dead, and rouse them who are asleep in sin, and at ease in Sion.

There is beside a greater noise in the world; for generally when a soul is bent for salvation, and his face is turned to our Saviour in earnest, and he with tears enquires his way to heaven, his friends, or relations, or old companions, or all together, strive to hinder him; the serious thinks he goes too far, and need not be so concerned, and the careless and the light-minded part laugh at and oppose him with all their might; they make a noise indeed, some cry out, he is seduced and led into errors and heresy, or are afraid he should leave his church or first religion (though perhaps that was none at all) or should renounce his baptism, or deny his faith. Others report he is distracted, mad, and beside himself. Others tempt and allure him back with great subtilty, promises, and offers, or court him into his former company, pleasures, and diversions; while yet others follow with cruel threatnings, slanders without number, mockings, revilings, &c. The father disowns his child, the relations change all love into bitter reproaches and hatred, the mother is against her daughter, and daughter against the mother, and nothing is heard round about but a storm, and a tempest, and persecution, and blasphemy on every side: and wherefore? Because one is turned a drunkard, a whoremonger, a stage-player, a thief, a murderer, a rebel? O no, but only because he is resolved to be Jesus Christ's disciple. Thus it has always been, and will continue

tinue to be so till Jesus comes the second time, and then it will cease for ever. This made our Saviour say, "that he who could not leave all for his sake was not worthy of him;" and with this he comforted his people, "They have hated me, and they will hate you, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

But besides all the noise made in the world, and in the house of our friends, there is a noise among the devils, for all rise up to hinder and trouble a newly awakened soul. Satan knows there is danger of his losing his slaves, and rages horribly. He strives with temptations, hurries, frights, and terrors to oblige the poor sinner who seeks mercy, to leave off and quit his search, nor ceases to assail the defenceless weak heart, till he has found a refuge in the wounds of a crucified Saviour, and then there is a noise through all the heavens, of harpers harping on their harps, and of the shoutings and hallelujahs of the angels and blessed spirits, at the return of a sinner to the Lord. Jesus himself is the author of this joy, by telling them, "Let us be glad and make merry, for this your brother was dead, but is alive again, he was lost, and is found."

This noise of joy properly begins when a sinner repents, but at that time he knows little of it; on the contrary he hears only the noise of the enemy, who crieth after him, the noise of a guilty heart, and of a clamorous and false world; but he shall hereafter hear "the noise of them that keep holy-day;" himself shall sing for joy and clap his hands, and leap for very gladness of heart.

Ezekiel observes farther, that "there was a shaking among the bones," as well as a noise, to signify how the convinced heart trembles at the

word of God. They are shook from all their false and deceitful hopes, from their sandy foundations and fallacious pleas; they feel themselves ready to perish, and are as if God shook them over hell. Their heart aches and sinks within them, their faltering lips can scarce speak plain, or utter any thing but broken signs, and short, but piercing prayers for mercy, and their poor knees are smiting together. Are any who hear me thus? O turn ye to that dear man who once went trembling into the garden of Gethsemane, sweating blood as he went, and crying out of the bitterness of his soul. He only knows your disease and what you want. He alone can sympathize truly with you, and help and ease you. Turn to that Jesus whose flesh and whose heart shook and trembled because of the Lord's judgments, and he will give you a rest to your souls. Apply to that good Physician, and you shall find him mighty to save.

This is the way by which all happy souls have escaped; when loaded and oppressed with guilt and fear they have fled to a bleeding, groaning, and agonizing Lord, and found refuge from the avenger of blood. All the noise and opposition made in the world, or in hell, has not hindered them, their threatenings and promises, their smiles and frowns, were treated with like indifference by the sincere souls, nothing swayed or drew them like Christ Jesus.

They were deeply and sensibly convinced of the danger they were in without a Saviour: they felt his words with invincible power, and having heard how God loved the world, that he once became like a lamb in their stead, and drank up, like a cup of wormwood and gall, the bitter wrath they had deserved, and at last died in hellish anguish to save them

them alive ; and this made their hearts bleed and shudder, nor did they, nor could they rest, till his small still voice within had silenced their fears and miseries, and made them feel his everlasting love and mercy.

Who never in his life was thus concerned about his salvation, who never was in any distress for mercy, or saw amazed his sinful state, nor was forced to cry out for the blood and help of Jesus as one ready to perish, who never was thus shaken from every thing but him and his righteousness, he never was awakened, but is dead to this day ; he has never had ears to hear the word of God ; he has never had eyes to see, but is blind ; he has no heart to understand ; but with all his sobriety, peace, and good hopes, with all his self-made comforts, he is in the utmost danger and peril, and, like the bones without life, dead to God and very dry.

There was yet another remarkable effect of Ezekiel's preaching ; the bones came to their proper place, every bone to his bone. This is to teach us, that the gospel brings those together that were at the greatest distance, and unites even such as before were enemies ; it causes the greatest order and decency, and sets every thing in its proper place. He adds, " the sinews and the flesh came upon the bones, and the skin covered them above, but there was no breath in them." In this state are many, many souls, and whole congregations and churches. They have heard the preaching of the gospel, and felt somewhat of the power of the word of God ; they have got good rules, orders, and articles of religion, like sinews, to bind them together, and have their morality, like a fine skin, over all—but there is no life in them. They are utter strangers to the voice of the blood of sprinkling

sprinkling within, have not yet received the Holy Ghost, nor know that Christ liveth in them. All their religion is the form of christianity, but they have not the power. O let every one ask his heart, "Is it not so with me?" I will not, I dare not say this of all, but of many it is certainly true; they have a good church, good laws, good rules and doctrines, appear like men and children of God, but after all, what our Saviour said once to a young man, may be said to them, "Yet lackest thou one thing." Thou hast a good form, perhaps, can boast of the antiquity, orthodoxy, or purity of thy church, and tell what good works thou hast done, how often fasted and prayed, how charitable and devout, how strict in thy duties, "but there is no life in thee," so long as thou art a stranger to the Lamb in thy heart, or unacquainted with his love inwardly, thou art, with all thy doings, like a dead branch and dry bones, yea, thou art very dry.

Now when Ezekiel saw that the sinews had knit bone to bone, and the flesh and skin covered them and made them in the form and fashion of men, but yet dead, the Lord bid him prophecy to the winds, and say to them in the name of the Lord God, that they might breath upon the dry bones and make them live, and he did so as he was commanded, and breath entered into them, and they stood up and lived, and became an army of men.

Here ministers may learn a weighty lesson; they may bring people together and make articles, creeds, and whatever else they please, to bind them in one body; they may teach them to cover themselves with what other covering they please, and when they have done all it will be like a body without the soul, till God breathes upon them, and
gives

gives them life. Let them therefore speak to the wind, to the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Giver of life, that he may inspire the souls and make them live; for without his immediate aid all our labour is in vain. We do not pray before our discourses because that has been the long received custom, or because others have done it, but because we would implore the north and south wind to blow upon the church, which is God's garden, that the spices may flow out: Or, in plain words, to beseech our Saviour to quicken the hearts of all who hear, that they may be converted and saved. We have not many instances in the Testament of the apostles using prayer before or after their preaching, but generally they delivered their errands and divine messages, and went their way; but now prayer is almost every where in use, before and after sermons; and when he that ministers, and they who hear, feel the want of the Holy Spirit, it has its great use and blessing, for then they ask in faith, and receive the presence of the Lord, which blesses every meeting, and is felt by all the faithful, to their great joy and comfort. Alas! how cold is that assembly where Jesus is not! And how dead and dry that meeting where he does not preside! As of old the camp rested when the cloud and pillar rested, and went forward when that moved before them, so is it now. Let the Shekinah, the glory, be absent, and none go forward, all stops and is at a stand, but let the Lord arise, and his Spirit move before, and all goes on after him happily. Also, as it is with the church of God in general, so is it with every child of God in particular; for till a soul has found our Saviour, and is made alive by him, he remains poor, and dead, and impotent, when He,
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the Sun of righteousness, ariseth upon him with healing in his wings, and when his Spirit brings the glad news, "Live, thy sins are forgiven thee!" then he can stand up and be happy; from that moment he becomes a new man, and lives a new life; he lives the life of the Son of God, and shall live for ever.

This is what the Lord aims at in the text, "I will put my Spirit in you, and ye shall live."

I wonder exceedingly how some men can read the scripture constantly, and yet deny altogether the gift of the Holy Spirit; for there is scarce any prophet that has not mentioned the promise of him; nor can we hardly open the New Testament but we find Jesus and all his servants confirming the blessed doctrine. How frequently is it repeated, "The Holy Ghost shall come. He shall be in you. He shall abide with you for ever. He will lead you into all truth. Your heavenly Father will give his Holy Spirit to them that ask him. Ye shall receive the Holy Ghost?" And indeed all are exempted from being children of God and Christ's disciples, who have him not in their hearts. See Rom. viii. 9. 1 John v. 12. 2 Cor. xiii. 5.

Without him all are dead to God while they live, and their works are dead works, and do not please the living God. A man who has not Christ in him, and who was never made alive by his breath, and by the word of his mouth, is no real christian; he may be called so, and may have dreamed and fancied he was a christian indeed, but he is one of that number "who have a name to live but are dead." "He that hath the Son hath life, saith the scripture, but he that hath not the Son hath not life." If he has not come to our Saviour and been pardoned by him, and fed upon his flesh and blood by a living faith,

faith, his estate is explained by Jēsus himself, "He has no life in him." The same gracious Lord God who poured out his Holy Spirit upon the prophets and fathers, and taught them to see afar off the redemption by our Saviour, and to believe on him, and depend upon his death to their salvation; the same Lord deals in like manner graciously by us now, and bestows on us the same faith, the same gift of grace, and the same Spirit, and by which only we can possibly become heirs of the glory to come, or believe to eternal life. It is the Holy Ghost that quickens those who come to, or believe in Jesus. He opens the eyes and lets men see their sin, and he unstops the ears that they may hear the voice, the soft still voice of the Son of man, and live. He awakes them from their graves, and beds of carnal security, and directs them to Christ, that they may have life: And though he could do all this without using preachers or ministers at all, and sometimes has done so, yet generally, "it has pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." He makes himself witnesses in all ages, and these he sets in his church to testify of him, and to set to their seal that God is true, and his words true and faithful. Should a bewildered soul enquire of them of the certainty of their doctrine, they can answer, "We are witnesses of these things;" we have been lost, but are now found, we have been dead, but are alive again, and shall live, because Jesus is our life for evermore.

The Israelites had been dejected, and thought, "as for us, we are cut off, and God has cast us away, we have no hope," therefore was Ezekiel shewn this vision, and ordered to say to that poor disconsolate house of Israel, that though there was no more likelihood of their deliverance than of the

resurrection of dry bones, yet would God surely visit them, and bring them up out of their graves, that is, the low estate in which they were like men dead and buried, "then will I put my Spirit in you, and you shall live, saith the Lord God!"

In this way a poor troubled sinner may think to himself, I am dead and like one gone down to the pit; my hope lessens, and my heart and soul is dead and heavy to the last degree; I am afraid I am gone too far to be saved, and that, for my part, I am cut off as a dry branch and withered, and fit for nothing but to be cast into the fire. Such thoughts often occur, where a person gets awakened and is much alone, or who has not understood, though they were dead, who believe in Jesus, yet shall they live. Here the gospel is of the utmost weight and importance, it is of real service, and sets before the soul ready to perish a crucified Saviour, a dying and bleeding Lamb, the sight of which revives the heart, and begins a new and everlasting life. The feet of them who bring the glad tidings are beautiful to such, for of them they hear that "the dry bones can live." In this respect, therefore, we must admire the wisdom of our dear Saviour, in sending men with the gospel rather than angels; for though many may think, If I could have an angel appear to me and tell me of salvation, it would at once satisfy me; yet in great measure such, who have so thought, had their wishes been granted, would be mistaken; for should an angel or blessed spirit announce the death and merits of our Saviour, in and declare his love and mercy, it is easy for a soul convinced of sin to think, Alas! thou art an angel, and one who kept his first estate, thou hast never sinned, nor been disobedient, nor felt a heart cold
and

and dead like mine, to thee therefore it may be right and just to believe so well of the Redeemer, but I am a sinner, a poor, lost, helpless, and dead sinner, and have no right to venture to the Saviour like thee. In this case, I say, a minister of Christ can be of more use than a vision of angels, for he is a witness of the grace and pardon of God our Saviour; he was once in the same deep mire and clay, and convinced of his sad condition by nature, but found mercy and everlasting life in the wounds of Jesus Christ: But there is a greater witness than men or angels, and that is the Holy Spirit, who is the "Lord and Giver of life, and who beareth witness with our spirits that we are the children of God." He will not commit this most important and weightiest work to any minister, however trusty or faithful, nor to any of the most dear angels, but is himself the ascertainment and witness of our adoption and sonship, that we need not be left to reason and question of the truth of an angelical vision, or be at the uncertainty of the message of a man, or be exposed to doubt and fear in their absence, supposing we could be well persuaded of their veracity and faithfulness; but we have the Spirit of truth with us, who cannot lie, and whose conviction in the heart is more solid and sure than if all heaven was opened, and every angel assured us of our part in Christ; yea, more solid and certain than if all the prophets, apostles, martyrs, and witnesses of every age stood before us, and preached to us how we were beloved of God, and confessed by our Saviour, in presence of all his holy angels. This witness remains, when visions cease, when we do not dream blessed dreams any more, when preaching is over, and time is no longer. "He will abide with us for ever. He will
never

never leave or forsake us," and in our last moments, when our strength fails, and our friends and nearest relations can comfort us no more, then he will continue "the faithful and true witness," in whom, till then, we live in peace here, and shall live to all eternity, through the death of Jesus, who is "the resurrection and the life." To whom be glory and thanksgiving for evermore. Amen.

20 MA 59

F I N I S.

The Safety of a True Christian.

BEING THE *4455. a 8*
15
SUBSTANCE
OF A
DISCOURSE

Delivered in LONDON,

In the YEAR 1744.

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By JOHN CENNICK,

“Who hath sealed us, and given us the earnest of his Spirit,” 2 Cor. i. 22.

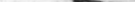
“The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him,” Psalm xxv. 14.

THE THIRD EDITION.

LONDON:

Printed and sold by H. TRAPP, No. 1, Paternoster-Row. 1786.

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Journal of Interpersonal Violence

EZEK. ix. 6.

"Come not near any man upon whom is the mark."

THESE words are a part of the charge which God gave to the destroying angels whom the prophet, in a vision, saw standing in the Lord's presence, each with his destroying weapon in his hand, and who were waiting at his word to slay without mercy all but such as were distinguished by a hidden or secret character, called in the text, "the mark." Ezekiel relates the manner of the sealing some to be saved, and the order to slay utterly all the rest, with an uncommon and striking solemnity. "He sings of mercy and judgment, of the goodness and severity of God" before the whole rebellious house of Israel: nor was the vision intended for their sakes only to whom at that time the oracles of God were sent, but the whole, like the most of the other inspired writings, concerns the race of mankind in general, and particularly those who are called by the Lord's name.

It was undoubtedly sent to warn men of an approaching day, wherein all who have satisfied themselves without "the power of godliness, the one thing

thing needful," should weep and wail bitterly, and be cut off and destroyed from among the people of God; and to inspire all who are any ways disposed to be saved, to make their election sure, and to get their interest and part secured in the book of life, as well as to shew forth their safe and happy condition "who are sealed to the day of redemption," and who have obtained of "God our Saviour the witness of the Spirit, that they are the children of God."

The blessings as well as curses made to the Israelites under the law have been observed chiefly to relate to things temporal, but then they were shadows of eternal things, and of which now the gospel treats plainly and without a veil. Hence we may innocently conclude, that how far soever this vision might relate to the overthrow and rejection of the Jews, on account of their unbelief, idolatry, and perverse behaviour, yet it certainly had respect to a time of greater desolation than that of cutting off the Israelites, or dispersing and scattering them among the nations: For St. John, in his book of Revelations, mentions of the things which shall come to pass in the last day, in much the same manner as in this part of Ezekiel's prophecy.

He saw that some angels, who had power to hurt the earth and the sea, &c. were charged not to do it "till the servants of God were sealed in their foreheads," and then to hurt and torment such who had not received that seal. Thus Ezekiel says, "There stood a man by the brazen altar, cloathed in white linen, with a writer's inkhorn by his side," who was appointed to set a mark on all that were mourn-
ers

ers in Israel, and who sighed because of the abominations of Jerusalem; and when he had done this, then the other angels, who had destroying weapons in their hands, were commanded "to go out after him and spare not, neither shew pity, but kill utterly old and young, women, maids, and little children, and to begin at the Lord's sanctuary;" but at the same time they were ordered, "Come not near any man on whom is the mark."

The person cloathed in white linen is, no doubt, our Saviour; for in this way he is described by all those who have seen him in his glory. His inkhorn is his pierced side, out of which he seals and marks his inheritance who are in the world. When he had said with a loud voice on the cross, "It is finished!" then were all his people ransomed, and the whole world retrieved and saved out of the enemy's hand; but after Jesus was dead, a soldier pierced his side, that out of his heart's most precious and costly blood he might sprinkle them, and mark them as a shepherd marks his sheep. This also is promised to all those who overcome, "I will write upon thee the name of my God, and I will write upon thee my new name." This is in other places called, "the secret of the Lord," and this appellation is given it by Job, David, and Solomon. It is also called, "that new name which no man knoweth saving him that receiveth it." It is the mark of the Lamb in their foreheads, the divine frontlet which the bishop of our souls bestows on all who are invited to the marriage-supper. In other parts of scripture the Holy Ghost calls it "a jewel put on the forehead." In short, it is no other than our Saviour's giving to the soul the seal and earnest
of

of his Spirit, whereby he makes himself known to them as he does not to the world, and in which they rejoice with joy unspeakable, knowing that nothing shall separate them from his love, or rend them out of his hands. They have received the image and mark of Jesus; the name of God is upon them; the engraving whereof is like the engraving of a signet, which none read, or blot out, or efface, but he only who is the Lord of hosts, and who has loved them with everlasting love, which is only known to the Lamb and themselves who have received it.

This is the One Thing which so many, with all their splendid shew of christianity, yet lack, and without which it will avail very little to have been called christians.

The Holy Spirit, who is also a faithful and true witness, will not suffer any to suppose they are right in the sight of God till they have received of him the Lord's badge and mark. He continually troubles and disturbs the profane and wicked man with shewing him his spiritual nakedness, his crimes and aggravating sins; and as once he called to Adam in the garden after his fall, "Adam, where art thou?" so he calls the sleepy and unconcerned part of the world, as if he said to each, Where art thou? In what a state art thou? Knowest thou not, O poor soul, that thou art still a servant of sin and satan; thou art unconverted; thou art no christian; thou art an enemy of Jesus; thy life, thy words, and thoughts, thy whole course is contrary to the scriptures and true religion, and also contrary to the convictions of thy conscience? Shouldst thou be called

called away in thy passions, or snatched out of the world in thy drunkenness or whoredoms, how wouldst thou meet death? how bear the judgment of the last day, or stand at the bar of the Lord? Thus secretly does the Spirit strive with the rebellious, and seeks with paternal tenderness to win them to Jesus. Thus he makes his mind to be felt often when no eye sees it, and in such a manner expostulates with souls, that sometimes they tremble, weep and pray; they confess their unsafe state, and seem to resolve to alter their course and be converted, but as soon as the next morning-light shines, or as soon as their fright is a little over, they hope they shall neither die or be called to judgment yet, and again take their former liberty of sinning, and with greater disobedience and presumption, at last quench the Holy Spirit, and send him away grieved; but whether he departs or shews forth all long-suffering towards them, he imprints too deep for all company, sin, pleasure, or satan himself to blot it out, that they are in the road to perish, and without that happy part of christianity, the feeling of his love, which all his children have,

Nor are people of a self-righteous disposition left to go on comfortably without any misgivings and doubts in regard to their being right: for the same Holy Spirit, who convinces the sinful of their gross outward crimes and offences, is also continually busied in shewing these that their righteousness is not perfect. It is as if he daily preached to their hearts, "Thou art weighed in the balance and art found wanting." He makes them feel how subject they are to the fear of death as well

as others; what natural inbred sins rise and stir within their hearts, while they look so well without. How much self-admiring, spiritual pride, hypocrisy and double-heartedness mingles with all their piety and devotion; how far they are from having a single eye; how far from being truly low in heart and full of faith; how worldly minded; how carnal; how dead and cold towards Jesus: and when they have carried their religious acts farther than ordinary, and put all their good purposes and vows in execution, he still whispers, "Yet lackest thou one thing, still one thing is needful. This dying persons betray to others who stand round their beds repeating their moral lives, duties, charities and good works, trying thereby to persuade them they are safe; they still are uneasy and dissatisfied; they are not yet without secret fears and jealousies lest they should miscarry; they are sensible things are not right with them; they have not a living faith in Jesus Christ; they find somewhat is wanting still; and indeed they think justly, and it is a pity they should be by any means cheated, for they want "truth in the inward parts;" they want to see Jesus is theirs; they want to feel the redemption, to be sealed; they want the mark. As soon as this is felt within, and the Spirit has testified of this to their hearts, as soon as he has shed abroad the love of Christ, or given them one divine touch, one view of their part in the blood of the Lamb, or shewn them a reconciled and loving Jesus, they can die in peace, they sing and think with faithful Simeon, "Now Lord let thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation."

All people are so far enlightened by the Sun of righteousness, as to see they are not right; and who can, or will afterwards venture on, and not seek to secure to themselves, through the assurance of faith, their part in the book of life, and in the flock and fold of the good Shepherd, but stay carelessly without the door of his wounds, such must look to be of that unhappy multitude, of whom Jesus complains, "Ye will not come to me that ye might have life; I would have healed you, but ye would not be healed; I would have gathered you often as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, but ye would not, and who, when the messenger of death shall call them out of the world, and when they stand with the small and great in the last day, shall fall in the general slaughter of the old and young who have not the mark.

In that day the having had a name to live will avail nothing; the riches of the rich will cry against him in the ears of the Lord of hosts, the wisdom of the wise will fail him, and he will weep bitterly; the strong man's knees will smite dreadfully together, and every one's face gather paleness, and no prayer, no plea, no excuse, no cries or tears will avert one moment the blow, or move to pity the destroying angels; they must remove mercy out of their eyes and hands, and slay utterly all who have not known God, nor obeyed his righteous gospel. They have not the mark of the sheep, and must perish with the goats. They have not the seal of the living God: satan may seize them: as reprobate silver, so shall they be refused in the day of decision, in the day when God shall try all them that dwell upon the earth.

SERM. I.

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When the Lord was minded to bring his last plague upon Egypt, and to make every house feel his displeasure at once, he first commanded his own people to sacrifice the paschal Lamb, and sprinkle the blood of the Lamb upon their door-post, that when the destroying angel should pass by at midnight, he might see the mark, and not enter that house. Accordingly all who feared the Lord, and hearkened to the voice of his minister Moses, did so; they made ready a lamb of the first year without blemish, and eat of the sacrifice in haste, at the same time they sprinkled the blood upon their door-posts and on the lintels; and while they were eating their supper, the destroyer received his commission, and without any mercy passed through the whole land of Egypt, and slew the eldest or first-born in every house, so that there was a cry heard throughout the land, such as never had been known since the world began; meanwhile the Israelites were all safe in their houses, they had the mark on their doors, they had sprinkled the blood in faith and were preserved; so that he who smote down the most reverend and ancient in every family, in that night much to be remembered, did not touch them.

Thus is it now: Jesus the chief priest, and all his ministers have forewarned us, that the angels of his wrath stand at his gates waiting only for the word, and in one moment the four who have power over the winds would loose their hands, and raise the last and final tempest, the finest cities would be laid in ruins instantly, the most magnificent buildings would be overturned, and not a stone left upon another which should not
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be thrown down, the mountains and hills would be swept away, and the sea and its waves would be roaring every where, while the pillars of heaven would be so shaken that the stars would fall as when a fig-tree casts its untimely figs shaken by a great wind; mean while the six who stand with their flaming swords drawn, would smite the nations, and all the kindreds of the earth, with an entire slaughter. This is called in the prophets, "the day of gloominess and darkness, which shall burn as an oven, and in which all the ungodly shall be as stubble." But before this day our Saviour has shewn us how to be saved. All who hear his voice, like wise virgins, get ready, they come in faith to himself, the true paschal Lamb, and his Spirit sprinkles on the door-posts of the heart his precious blood. "We are come, saith the apostle, to the blood of sprinkling." This secures all who have found it; so that let the judgment hasten on, or linger, they have received the mark; and let it be this evening or next midnight, or at cock-crowing, or to-morrow morning that the angels of destruction shall pass through the guilty world, or let all out of the bottomless pit be unbound to go over the earth to destroy all thereon, no harm shall happen to the sealed-ones, nor shall any evil come near their dwellings; a thousand may fall beside them, and ten thousand at their right hands, but it shall not come nigh them. No plague shall cut them off, no son of violence shall approach to hurt them; and wherefore? because they obeyed the voice of the Lord their God, and fled to the sanctuary of the cross of Jesus; they have their hearts and consciences sprinkled with the blood of the Lamb. Their sins are blotted out, they have be-

believed and are saved. The Holy Ghost has sealed
 them, and anointed them kings and priests to God
 and the Lamb, and they shall stand before the God
 of the whole earth safely. His new name who
 died for them, the name of the New Jerusalem
 and the name of his Father is upon them. If the
 blood of a common Lamb sprinkled in faith on
 the doors of the Hebrews could so keep off the
 angel from doing them harm, and if he could so
 be deterred from hurting them, that not one suffered
 the least damage, how much more must the blood
 of the Lamb of God sprinkled on the heart preserve
 it against all the gates and powers of hell in safe-
 ty for ever! Satan, and every enemy, knows what
 the blood of Jesus can do; he has already heard
 the Judge's charge, "Touch not mine anointed;
 Come not near any man on whom is the mark."
 He has heard the eternal decree made in their fa-
 vour, and trembles before the blood of Jesus, and
 like lightning flies before it. O people, who art
 sealed and marked herewith, "Who is like unto
 thee? thou art saved of the Lord; the Holy One of
 Israel is thy defence, the everlasting God is thy
 refuge."

When Rahab was told by the spies what the
 Lord would do to Jericho, and how all therein
 should die by the sword, she also was warned to
 put out of her window the mark and sign which
 was told her, and she did so, she hung out the
 scarlet thread, and when the day came, in which
 at the last blowing of the rams-horns, the angels
 of God overturned and threw down the wall of
 the city, her house stood safe, though it was built
 upon it. The Holy Ghost signifies hereby, as by
 the sprinkling of blood, the same preservation of those
 who

who believe, and out of whose window hangs, as it were the scarlet thread, the bond of the covenant in the blood of Christ. Let the stars fall, let the skies be rolled up, and the heavens pass away with a great noise, and the firmament melt with fervent heat, let all God's thunder-bolts fall, and break in pieces every goodly thing, and let the showers of fire and brimstone fall and set the whole universe in a flame, they shall be safe, as Rahab in her house upon the walls of Jericho, they shall be out of danger, every thunder-clap, every storm and judgment, every stroke of divine wrath, and every destroying angel, have their commission, "Come not near any man on whom is my mark." Such shall wait, like virgins who have oil in their lamps, when they shall see the Lord descend with ten thousand of his saints; they shall wait with inexpressible longing to see the Son of Man coming in the clouds, and to hear the cry, "Behold he comes, the Bridegroom comes, go ye up and meet him in the air. O how will they rejoice! how thankful will they be that once in their life-time they laid hold on eternal life, and made their calling and election sure by believing unfeignedly on Jesus Christ! How will they adore the riches of his grace, who prevented them to deceive themselves by resting without the door of the fold, by stopping short of "the mark of the prize of their high calling," or by sleeping like others who are foolish virgins without oil in their lamps.

But may I not ask you who are present here, in which number would you be reckoned, think ye, should the trumpet now sound? are you of the
blessed

bleſſed few who are marked? or are you ignorant what it means?

You know in the parables of the ten virgins, that all of them expected the Bridegroom, all were profeſſors, "all went out to meet him;" and therein conſiſted the wiſdom of the wiſe, "they took oil in their lamps," and were ready to meet the Bridegroom, let him come when he would; on the other hand, the folly of the fooliſh was their neglect. Setting aſide all the nations of thoſe who are not named after Chriſt, and who make little of his appearing or ſecond advent, one half, if not more, of thoſe who are called by his name, are fooliſh virgins, and take the lamp, have a glorious profeſſion, but have no oil; they are without eternal life, without the grace that bringeth ſalvation, and ſleep on and take their reſt as if all was well, they ſlumber and dream of being chriſtians, and think they have made ſome proficiency in the true religion of Jeſus Chriſt, when, dear me! they know only his name, and have no more the witneſs of his Spirit that they are his, and know no more what it is to be ſealed by him to the day of redemption, than Turks, or children unborn: To ſuch the day of the Lord would be terrible, and for them to hear the midnight cry, "Behold the Bridegroom cometh!" would be worſe than to hear the loudeſt thunders of mount Sinai, worſe than to have heard the ſhrieks and cries of Egypt when their firſt-born were ſlain; Such would wail becauſe of him, and the mourning of ſuch at the deſcending of the Lord to judgment would be more and worſe than the mourning
in

in the valley of Hadadrimmon ! O may I in that day be found worthy to stand before the Son of Man !

What will make the day of judgment more awful will be the bringing to light all the secret sins, the black and horrid crimes, as well as all the slighting and neglecting salvation, the hard thoughts and words spoken against the Lamb, and revealing the hidden mystery of iniquity in every creature ; all which might have been done away in the fountain of the blood of Christ, had not they made light of it, and trifled till the season and day of grace passed over. Then must the hypocrites and dry and dead professors feel first the sword of the destroyer : " Begin, says God, at my sanctuary," begin at those who have named my name, at the ministers and unfaithful servants who have rejected the Corner-Stone, who have not warned the souls, but been careless watchmen, who have rather hushed and lulled to sleep such as were awaking and beginning to be concerned, persuading them, there is no more necessary than an honest moral life, and " who have healed the wound of the daughter of my people slightly, crying, Peace, peace, when there is no peace : " and they began at the honourable men, which are before the house of God, i. e. they began with the persons cried up for good men, and noted and honoured for their strictness and devotion, for having done a great deal, and compassed sea and land to make a proselyte ; but who, after all, were without the seal of the Spirit. In that day, and not till then, will the cause be decided between the false and true professor of Christ. Then, however they have
dissembled.

dissembled, and made a fine appearance of religion, all but inward and pure christianity will burn up, and leave the almost christian miserable; but as they cheated themselves, and liked to be deceived, they must bear the loss and blame, because in their life-time, and in the day of their visitation, they did not prize or value the precious wounds and blood of Jesus, nor hid in the clefts of that Rock. They slighted him, they lived without him, they loved the world, they chose the honour of men, they would not come to our Saviour for life, they chose their own way, and ventured on, and must now feel what it is to be without Christ in the world.

It will be far otherwise with the children of God, the once despised and reproached, but now honoured and blessed people. As soon as Jesus sits on the clouds, and all the heavens are opened, and their innumerable hosts blowing their trumpets, and harping on harps to the Lamb that was slain, how will they lift up their heads! the first smile they get from their dear Lord shall more than reward them for all what they have undergone and suffered on his account in the world; but, he shall confess them in the presence of his Father, and before all his holy angels, These, will he say, are they that have followed me, these continued with me. "Come, ye blessed children of my Father, come up hither." Those arms which were once bound to the cross shall embrace them, and the same lips once struck by the officer shall kiss them. They shall be caught up to meet him, they shall sit down with him on the throne; and when he shall ascend from his judgment-seat, they

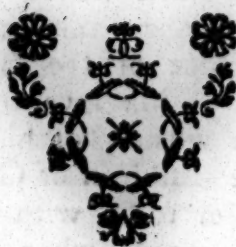
they too shall ascend with him, and enter into the wedding chamber, before the door is shut. They shall have a right to enter by the gates into the holy city, and to eat of the fruit of the tree of life which is in the midst of the paradise of God, and shall live for ever with him.

Ah! do not you wish to be among these children of the bride chamber? do not you long after this happiness, and is not Balaam's with the desire of your heart, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my latter end be like his? Methinks I hear you say it is. Why then, nothing can hinder you but your own poor bad self-will. Ask any thing of Jesus, and he will do it for you. Come to him honestly, and with an upright and sincere heart, and seek his salvation, and you shall find it. Be in earnest, for his name's sake, and for your own soul's sake; leave all the world, and for this moment retire out of it, and devote and give up yourselves wholly to follow him, nor satisfy yourself with a self denying and mortified behaviour, or with an innocent or strict life; but look for the inward witness, the seal and mark which I have been treating of, and which is on the hearts and foreheads of all the inheritance of the Lord; I mean, get such a confidence of his love to you, and such a secret and hidden witness of his spirit with your spirits that you are children of God, and that you are destined by him to be with him for ever, and you will not be ignorant what is his mark, nor will you any more dread death, or have a fearful looking for of judgment; you will sit down at his feet in peace, you will sleep and wake happy; live

and die to the Lord, and be saved with an everlasting salvation, will be blessed in this world and in the world to come, in time and in eternity, and nothing shall be for ever able to pluck you out of his hands; you will bless yourselves in the Lord, and have your hearts leap for joy, when you are called hence to be no more seen; for then you will go in peace to God your Saviour: Or should you stay till he comes, you would meet him with eternal joy and gladness. To him be glory and thanksgiving and salvation and praise for ever and ever, Amen.

F I N I S.

20 MA 59



The Assurance of Faith; or the Experience of a True Christian.

BEING THE
SUBSTANCE
OF A
DISCOURSE

DELIVERED AT
GLENEVY in the County of ANTRIM
in IRELAND,

In the YEAR 1754.

By JOHN CENNICK.

Let us draw near with full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water, HEB. x. 22.

THE THIRD EDITION.

LONDON:

Printed and sold by H. TRAPP, No. 1, Paternoster-Row. 1786.

The Assurance of Faith; or the Ex-
istence of a True Christian.

BRING THE
SUBSTANCE
OF A
DISCOURSE

DELIVERED AT
CLINCH
BY OF ANTRIM


BY JOHN CANNON.

Let us draw near with confidence of faith, hav-
ing our hearts purified from all unbelief,
and our bodies washed with pure water. Heb.
x. 22.

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ISAIAH XXXviii. 17.

*Thou hast in love to my soul delivered
it from the pit of corruption, for
thou hast cast all my sins behind thy
back.*

THESE words are a part of that writing which Hezekiah the good king of Israel wrote after a recovery from sickness, and is a sort of a song of thanksgiving, and a relation of his happy experience, viz. of his own natural estate, and of the work of conversion on his heart.

I prize this portion of holy scripture the more, because under the law, the believer generally walked in a cloud, and but few seemed permitted to look behind the veil, and to experience the blessedness which, through the gospel, is every child of God's proper right and privilege.

From Moses until Christ, that veil which was upon all nations darkened the Israelites also, and in great measure overshadowed the whole church of God which was among the Jews; and only a small number of choice and chosen men and women, such as the prophets, and those who believed their

SERM. II.

report,

report, had true ideas of the kingdom and redemption of him that should come; and hence it was that the prophets who spoke plainly of Christ, and who having searched diligently and found out the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow, in a sort of extasy and rapture uttered the glad news, were as coldly received, and often, if not always, the most persecuted and most despised of their time.

The truth was, they could not relish the testimony of the men inspired, but liked rather to hear of being the greatest people in the world, to be prospered in all their wars, to be rich, to reign, to enjoy a flow of milk and honey, and to abound in all plenty, and to have kings among themselves whose dominions should have no end, and to see all the heathen hewers of wood, and drawers of water subject to them. They loved this world, and erred in their hearts about the world to come; and this made their chief minister sigh over them, when he was finishing his course, "Oh that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end." They were as too many of us are, fond of things temporal, and careless of things eternal; lovers of the shadows, but thoughtless and inadvertent in the substance.

But stiff-necked and disobedient as they were there were among them in all ages, men, who like Hezekiah, sought after the best riches, and who followed the example of their fathers, "counting themselves in the world strangers and pilgrims, and looking for a heavenly country and a city that has foundations whose builder and maker is God."

These

These fought and found the Lord : These received the remission of their sins, and their songs of praise are often filled with expressions of the assurance of faith. These abound among the Psalms, which however collected by the sweet singer of Israel, are not his alone, but the work of many saints who with him partook of the same faith and were illuminated by the same Paraclete and Comforter.

It is easy to prove out of the Psalms of David and others, as well as out of Isaiah, Ezekiel and Zechariah, that they who believed truly in our Saviour, though so far off, knew their sins were forgiven and blotted out, to be remembered no more ; and this grace they prophesied should come unto us : But there is something particularly beautiful in that writing of Hezekiah, out of which I have been reading. It is to me a solid and weighty account of God's dealings with him, and tallies with the experience of all true christians in the world.

Three things are particularly to be observed in his relation.

First, The distress he was in before our Saviour spoke peace to him and delivered him from his sins.

Secondly, The assurance he had of being pardoned, and accepted by his heavenly Father, and saved ; and how boldly he testifies that this must be the case with all the children of God.

Thirdly

Thirdly, The cause of all; which he says, was the love of Jehovah to him: of each of these let me speak a little.

And first, I will mention his distress. He was outwardly troubled with sickness, and within with fears and heaviness: he wept sore for fear of dying, and was in bitterness about his peace with God. He expected every morning to be cut off, through a grievous boil that caused his illness; and every evening he dreaded more than meeting a lion, that the Lord would remove him, while a more heavy burden lay on his heart; for he doubted if he should ever see the Lord in the land of the living. There are few lovers of Jesus who read this pathetic writing but with tears in their eyes think, 'Ah dear Saviour so it was with me; thus I thought once; this was my case. I cried and mourned alone. I sat moping and grieving in secret like a dove. I seemed to sigh unregarded, like the swallow that chatters alone on the house-top. I was in pain for a Saviour; I mourned for him as one mourneth for his only son. I was in bitterness for him whom I had pierced, as one is in bitterness for his first-born.'

Thus it was with poor Hezekiah; nor was he comforted till the Lord pitied him, and saw his tears, and sent mercy and pardon to him. O this was a happy sickness, a sanctified visitation! For this little moment's affliction he shall thank the Lamb to all eternity. It was grievous for a few days, but had the desired effect, and helped to lay him low at the throne of grace; and now behold

behold he who turned to the wall upon his bed and wept, he who dreaded to be consumed, and expected daily when the Lord would make an end of him, is now in peace. He has found a merciful Saviour, and is with him; he once trembled to think he should behold men no more, and be no more with the inhabitants of the world: now he sees the Son of man, and is with the inhabitants of the world above. O that sickness might thus be blessed to all those who pine away with it! They have much time, and are released from the employments and hurrying business of this life; O that they would turn to him "who himself bore their sicknesses and carried their infirmities," and pray him to help them to the place where sickness, sorrow and pain is no more, and where all tears are wiped away from their eyes. They may have many or few to comfort them with hopes of doing well again, recovering their health, &c. but till they have the assurance of their part in Jesus Christ, they need the right Comforter, and are without the best Friend: Had they his presence, then, when none else were near to comfort them, he would be near, and to have him is better than life, and to die in him is gain.

It is very common for persons, before their assurance of the love of Christ, to be in misery and sore afflicted. To me it would be a great proof that a man was unconverted, who never knew what it was to be so pained at his very heart, so concerned about his soul's future welfare, that he could not rest or be easy. Such who sleep on and take their rest, and never experience that distress, which our Saviour calls "hungering and thirst-

ing, being weary and heavy laden, being ready to perish, &c." were never awakened, they are in a carnal security and dead to the divine life, dead to the faith, dead to the Lord, and to their own souls. They deserve that character in the prophet, "Careless and at ease in Sion." But though in general children of God in this sense, thro' much tribulation enter the kingdom; yet there are instances of some who have been so drawn by love, and carried so like lambs in the Shepherd's bosom, that they are excused from much pain, and saved from many sorrows; yet altogether are they not strangers to that heart-uneasiness which I have been speaking about. Many have therefore called it the pangs of the new birth, and our Saviour himself so compares it, John [xvi. 20.]

Who can forbear to be uneasy when the Holy Spirit awakes him from his dangerous sleep, shews him his wicked heart and life, sets before him in order his sins, and how great wrath he justly deserves? Who, unregenerate and conscious of his being a natural and carnal man, can do otherwise than shudder when he knows he must die, and after that come to judgment; and when he feels that if he should be called away as he is, he must perish in eternal burnings, and be numbered among foolish virgins, hypocrites and unbelievers? But what can pierce still deeper and cut with more intense pain, is the conviction that we have slighted Christ, slighted and disesteemed his person and merits, his sufferings and blood, his shame and humiliation, his labour and servitude, and as it were, trampled under foot the holy things wherewith he redeemed us; besides denying and re-
fusing

fusing the tender calls of his Spirit, and rejecting his convictions. These reflections, when the eyes of the soul are opened, cause inexpressible sadness and grief. These make the heart sink, and the tears flow day and night, this makes the stoutest tremble and sigh, nor can all the world cure them whose eyes God has thus enlightened.

In the same manner when he has touched those deaf ears "which refused to hear the voice of the charmer," and said Ephatha, they no more listen to the scriptures with a cold or untouched or unaffected heart, but the thunders of Mount Sinai make the marrow in their bones quake; and then often betwixt satan who labours hard to disturb, discourage and perplex them, carnal friends with their threatenings and promises, false teachers with their smooth doctrines and self-righteousness, and their own more false and deceitful hearts, they are overwhelmed with trouble and confusion, and for fear, lest amidst all those dangers they should lose eternal life, they are brought to the very sharpest pain, and deepest distress. An unusual thoughtfulness makes them heavy, and temptations and many groundless suggestions dishearten them to the last degree, but all this in the end makes them resolve to cast themselves down before our dear Saviour's feet with this determination, "If I perish, I will perish there."

Souls in this case are to be pitied, but they are safe, they are in good hands; he who sweat blood in his agony knows the right time to help, and he who brought them to the birth, will surely give strength to bring forth. Nor can I believe a soul

who sincerely wants salvation, and who more than all things dreads being parted from our Saviour or his love, will perish; they may have fears, but he will deliver them out of all. Who reads the psalms which were the experience of David and others under the Old Testament, and who thinks only on the reason why Paul, after he was so shocked at his entry into Damascus, could neither eat or drink for three days and nights, but continued praying, will not be surprised if a soul in our time should be so broken and cast down under a sense of his sin and want of Jesus. The behaviour of Mary, the thief, those who were pricked to the heart under Peter's discourse at Pentecost, the jailor at Philippi, and many others are only instances of this kind; and as I said before, Hezekiah is far from being the only person who fell under such a concern, as made him express the language of his heart in such a manner; for all the children of God drink of it. Jesus has drank up the dregs. He has taken the bitter draught, the wormwood and the gall, and he lets us pledge him.

It is both safe, and also an honour to us that we have thus been tried. Safe, because when souls are thus stripped of all our false hopes, their legal righteousness, and fancied goodness, they see, feel, and are assured of their own vileness, inability, and lost estate; and are divinely assured that they must perish for ever and ever, unless Jesus out of free mercy and mere pity and compassion should help them. They are, as it were, in the deep mire and clay, in the shadow of death, on the verge and brink of hell, and know nothing less than

than a miracle of grace can deliver them. This is safe for them; for thus does the Holy Ghost do with them, to bring them off entirely from all self-goodness, and from every hope from angels and men, to fly to the cross as poor, guilty, condemned and hell-deserving wretches, at whose heels the avenger of blood pursues with all his terrors. This is safe for them when they have found mercy, for they are saved from ascribing any thing to their own deservings, and to their own merits; they know, they remember well (when a self-righteous thought rises, or any thing that would be self-admiring, or self-pleasing stirs) what a lamentable, helpless and ruined condition they were in, when Jesus saw their tears, heard their cries, he had pity on their pain, and delivered them; and this makes them thank, and adore, and love him, on whose head are many crowns, and with shame and deepest gratitude they lay all the glory of their salvation and happiness at his feet, who only is worthy to receive blessing and thanksgiving, because he was slain.

It is an honour; for thereby we taste a little, we sip of the cup which he drank, and can guess, with some justness, what our dear Lord felt, when the sins of all were laid on him. We do not really taste the wrath of God, nor the punishment; for that the Lamb took on himself and bore alone; but what we experience is in apprehension, and is somewhat of that distress and amazement which Jesus shared so powerfully when he foresaw what he must undergo for his poor people, when the cup ready mixed was held out, and when his sweat was like blood.

This

This also learns us to prize the redemption. We reflect with eternal joy, from what a death has he delivered us !

There is, at the same time, a danger in this awakened state, of which I have been treating. A soul can value itself on account of what it has sustained, and despise them who have not been tried in the same way, or who have not so long laboured in the fire. This is from the old root of self-righteousness, and is unseemly in the eyes of Jesus, and odious in the sight of a soul truly converted.

Very often the stubbornness of a soul, the being loath to part with all its own holiness, its hardness of heart, and false knowledge, causes it much trouble, and creates it much unnecessary uneasiness. Did a soul directly, on the sight of its own lost state, fly to our Saviour, and with all simplicity believe in him, it would escape and get out of the hands of the adversary, and before the spirit of the law could assault, or terrify, or satan tempt, or the avenger reach them, they would get into the city of refuge, and so be out of the reach of all perplexity. Let then, whoever is troubled in mind, concerned about being happy, or afraid of miscarrying, immediately apply to the Lamb ; they will never be more fit to come to him, than in the moment they are sensible of their poverty and sinfulness. When is a man more fit to go to the surgeon, than when wounded and with his bones dislocated and broken ? When is a person more fit for the physician, than when exceeding sick ?
When

When does the sinner more need a Saviour, than when ready to perish? May every trouble, every sickness, every conviction bring you and me to the feet of Jesus Christ! So it was with Hezekiah, when presently his sickness of body and soul took a turn. He was almost overcome with his misery, and with his heart ready to burst, when he cried out "Lord, I am oppressed! undertake for me." Our Saviour heard, and knew the time was come to deliver him, and immediately did undertake for him, and released him at once from the sickness of his body, and the sin of his soul; and thus he does to all souls in like distress. When they turn their faces and hearts to him, when they have done with all other hopes, refuges and helps, and pray to him alone, one may safely say to such, "Ye are not far from the kingdom of God." Ye are nigh to be delivered indeed. Your salvation slumbereth not, and your redemption lingereth not.

O if there be any who hear me, who are oppressed, lay hold on the horns of this altar, and use Hezekiah's availing prayer, "Lord I am oppressed, undertake for me. I am in a perilous condition, beset on every side, O take my part! I am a debtor, undertake for me: Thou canst free and set me at liberty, for against thee only have I sinned; and thou, Lord, if thou wilt, canst make me clean. I am like a poor man who has had a suit at the bar, undertake for me. Thou mighty Counsellor advise me, thou almighty Advocate, plead my cause, and gain my suit." This do out of the bottom of thy heart, and thou shalt prove that true of Jesus: "He is a friend of publicans and sinners."

But

But now it is time that I speak on the second thing remarkable in Hezekiah's writing, and that is, the assurance he had of his being pardoned and forgiven.

“ Behold (he says) for peace I had great bitterness: but thou hast, in love to my soul, cast all my sins behind thy back.” This is generally the language of a pardoned and accepted sinner. This is the joyful sound of them that come to Christ. This is the right and privilege of every believer in Jesus.

Let who will oppose this comfortable doctrine, it is true, and all who seek shall find it so; and they who oppose and contradict it, speak against the oracles of God, and the experience of his children. Unbelief has invented all the fallacious and delusive arguments against the assurance of faith; and because the far greatest part of mankind are void of this excellent gift, therefore those who would fain be accounted true christians, who have it not, are on the strongest side, and have the advantage of all the carnal and plausible reasons for their being safe, though ignorant of it; but they have no ground in the scriptures. There are swift witnesses against such as plead for walking in darkness, not knowing whither they are going. “ Let us draw near, says the apostle, with full assurance of faith.” Another apostle exhorts the professors of christianity, “ to make their calling and election sure.” And John says, “ that all the scriptures are written that men might believe on the name of the Son of God, and have eternal life through his name, and that they might know that they had eternal life.” This is the nature of faith; it is itself the evidence of things unseen

unseen, it is the substance of a hoped for heaven and eternal glory; it has always with it the eternal life which is in Jesus Christ. "All my people, saith the Lord, shall know me. We know him that is true. We know that when this earthly house is dissolved, we have a house with God, eternal in the heavens. I am persuaded, nothing shall separate us from the love of God. I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that I shall see him for myself." But why need I rehearse so many scriptures, since all aim at nothing less than the believing soul might be happy here and hereafter? To ascertain this to the faithful, the Holy Ghost is given that he might comfort the children of God, shew them the things of Christ, glorify him, and dwell in them for ever. "He beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God" He leads into all truth, he reveals the good things to us, which the eye hath not seen nor ear heard. He sheds abroad the love of God, seals to the day of redemption, and is the earnest of our everlasting inheritance.

The prophets and apostles would have been but poorly off, if they had not been assured of being happy for ever. The primitive christians would have had also but little encouragement to attempt the conversion of the heathen, if there had been no more certainty of eternal happiness in true christianity, than in the strict moral life of a heathen; nor could the martyrs, in all ages, have met death so cheerfully and with songs of joy, if they had not had the assurance of faith, and thereby enjoyed Christ's love in them. But they had it, and every true believer has it also. Some insincerity at the bottom, some darling sin, or cherished unbelief hinders all who have it not. It is a

great gift, but not too great for him that bestows it. It is worthy of its Giver. It is the way in which he manifests himself to his children, as he does not unto the world; and must be sought for, for it is the hidden treasure, it is what no man knoweth saving him that receiveth it.

A truly poor sinner does not ask, How is it possible? How can this be? But because Jesus has promised it, he believes, and seeks, and finds it; while one, who has much knowledge in his head, thinks he has attained something great, and settles upon his lees, with his heart still among the fearful and unbelieving. Those above all others are to be blamed, who hinder souls to press after this blessedness. Surely they have it not themselves, for did they enjoy it, they would be eager to have all their hearers enjoy the same precious faith; but therein they shew how unwilling they are to think themselves mistaken, and unconverted. Surely they love darkness rather than light, and do not want to be undeceived, but are the blind leaders of the blind.

When they say, No one in this life can know our Saviour, or their sins forgiven; how have they read the scriptures? Why, with eyes that could not see, and they have heard it with ears that could not hear, and thought thereon with a heart that could not understand; for all the scriptures teach, that if any man says he has communion with God, and walks in darkness, he lieth. He that follows Christ shall not walk in darkness, he shall have the light of life. He shall know whither he goeth, and the way he shall know.

When

When they say, We cannot know till we die ; how weak is their doctrine ? for might not they affirm as well, that we should not know then ? Who ever came from the dead to let us hear how it passed with them ? Or where have the scriptures taught a lesson so carnal ? If a believer in Christ does not know if he shall be happy till he dies, then wherein does he excel our holy faith ? Or why is it preferable to that of the Turks, or the worshippers of Confucius ? They who are sincere among these hope they shall be happy, but do not know it ; and if we did not know, we and our religion are on a level with them and their darkness.

O adored be the Lamb, who is the Sun of righteousness in this benighted world ! And who does not leave his flock like bewildered sheep, but is with them, dwells with them, and in them, comforts them, is found of them, manifests himself to them, and gives them to know him.

Should he forgive us only then [when] we depart, he would lose his glory ; for we could not praise him to others, nor tell to his honour what he had done for us ; and therefore, full of joy Hezekiah breaks out, “ The grave cannot praise thee, death cannot celebrate thee ; they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth.” As if he would have said, Should men not know thy forgiveness till death, then they could not praise thee before their children, nor tell of their experiencing thy grace and mercy. When once the body is laid to rest in the grave, it is too late to expect it to celebrate thy praises. They that go to the tomb, cannot relate thy

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mercies,

mercies, nor can they, who venture into eternity, without thy pardon, hope for thy truth; but the "living, the living, he shall praise thee," as I to-day; he shall tell his believing friends, his neighbours, "O come hither, and hearken, and I will declare what God has done for my soul." I was once in a poor way, I was in bitterness for want of peace with God my Saviour; and, lo! out of love to my soul, he has cast all my sins behind his back. Thus, he says, "The Father shall make known thy truth to his children; he shall tell them, I am a witness, my sons, my daughters, that salvation is in the Lord; I have found so, I have sought his mercy, and experienced it in my heart, and therefore can lay my grey hairs with joy in the grave.

O dear people! do not dream of enjoyments after death, who have been so negligent of your interest in our Saviour now in your life-time, as not to insure to yourselves his love and forgiveness. Do not fancy death, and after death, is the only right time to know his salvation: "the living, the living, he shall praise him," as Hezekiah did. Now is the right time to be assured that you shall go to heaven. "Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation."

Only the assurance of faith renders this life happy and comfortable; and at the same time entirely abolishes the fear of death and hell, and creates the truest love and thankfulness to our Saviour. As for such who wantonly and wildly confess, If they knew they should be saved, they would live in all manner of sins; let them know, as long as they are in that mind, they shall never
have

have it, nor heaven neither. They are on satan's side, and willing servants of sin.

A soul who has found this blessedness of faith, has far other thoughts. He loves our Saviour too dearly to grieve him, and prizes his dear-bought happiness too much, to forfeit the enjoyment of it one hour for all the world. Would to God all who name the name of Jesus, knew this faith! the earth would be a nether heaven and paradise.

Our walking in the assurance of faith with humility and real poverty of spirit, which always accompany it, not only has peace in respect of the confidence he has of being accepted of his heavenly Father, through his beloved Son Jesus; but he walks with God as Enoch and Noah did; he has (to use the New-Testament language) "communion and fellowship with the Father and the Son," and can speak to his dear Saviour as a child to his Father, and as a man talketh with his friend, so he converses, by prayer, continually with his Lord; and is familiar and intimate with God, who made and loved him beyond all he could ever ask or wish. he knows his Redeemer; he is acquainted with God, and at peace with him: an eternal covenant of peace is made and in force between him and the Lamb; the mountains may depart, and the hills be carried into the deep of the sea, but the covenant of peace, which the Lamb of God has established with him, shall not be removed, world without end; nor will our Saviour be angry with him any more, nor will he leave or forsake him, but the ark of his presence shall dwell with him, and he will be with him going out and coming in, and in all troubles, in all company, in all countries

tries and places the Lord himself will comfort him and give him rest. The dread of endless death, the gnawings of a guilty conscience, and the terrors of judgment to come and eternity, vanish out of his heart : the death of Christ has devoured up all other deaths, and his misery and pain has swallowed up and devoured all curses and dangers, so that the peace of God, Jesus Christ's own peace, and that which he has had from everlasting, rules in him ; and he trusts in the Lord, and is not afraid. For who can he fear ? because of what should he tremble ? the mighty God of Jacob, the omnipotent King of saints, the Lord of hell and death is on his side ! He has forgiven him ; who can lay to his charge, or impute folly to him ? The blood of the Lamb has washed him so white, that he, who could see no iniquity in Jacob, nor behold perverseness in Israel, looks on him as fair, " altogether fair, and without spot." Thus does he live blessed, and in the glorious liberty of the children of God. Thus he dwells safely alone, and enjoys the kingdom of God within himself ; while the noisy world are clamouring without ; and the nominal christians, and such as are not upright and sincere, through unbelief in Jesus, go unhappy, and miss the enjoyment of the unsearchable riches of Christ, and his presence and love in this world. This is the happiness of a disciple of Christ. Of this I am a witness ; and thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delights to honour. Such honour have all his saints.

Such can say to enquiring souls, whose faces are towards Sion, I am the man who have been
of

of all others, a sinner. I have lived careless and mistaken in the world, dead to God while I lived : but after I was awakened by the voice of my Beloved, I fought him with tears, and with a heart ready to break. I lay down in sorrow, and rose oppressed ; nor could eat or drink in peace, but was always fighting for mercy, and till the Lord shewed me mercy, and manifested himself to me ; and now I have found Him whom my soul loveth. I have my eyes open to his love ; I have found the Lord. I now live to him, and he lives in me. I am his, and he is mine,

But should it be asked, Is there then no danger of losing this happiness? Can a person, who has faith, sin no more? Yes, verily, there is danger ; for pardoned and beloved as the believer may be, yet he is a sinner, and will carry his old spoiled nature of flesh and blood to the grave. He must be as a centinel watching over it and its dead fruits ; for though he has a new heart and a new spirit, he has a sinful body, in which rise and stir the motions of sin, and which nothing can damp or overcome but the sprinkling of the blood of Christ. This keeps the soul low and ashamed, and obliges him to live a sort of life like martyrdom ; he feels desires and lusts which must be crucified ; and however they may be natural, and not so abominable in their first motions, yet they must be denied and mortified. They war against the soul, and are contrary to the chaste nature of the virgin-like Spouse, to whom the believer is wedded. All acts of carelessness, and especially any thing of disobedience, and refusing, or not heeding

heeding the tender rebukes and warnings of the Holy Spirit, lead into darkness: and when an unfaithfulness is allowed but a moment, it brings a cloud and vail over the sanctuary. This experience, as well as scripture, teaches the christian; and therefore, like David, he finds it good to hold fast by the Lord. He continues with Jesus, and will not stir from his cross and crucified person. It is his strong hold, his fortress and safeguard, his only refuge in any danger, his only secure place.

If a pardoned and absolved person should venture into any sort of unlawful love, unjust behaviour, worldly and carnal pleasures, he must not wonder if his tender Father visits his offences with a rod, and his sins with scourges: or should selfishness, pride, ones own righteousness, or the like, be indulged, he will suddenly feel a withdrawing of the powerful presence of our Saviour; and to perceive the heart cold toward him, or be conscious of an indifference to his merits, or to find any thing separate, though but for a little, between the Lamb and him, is worse to the soul than death, and far, far more to be dreaded by the sincere christian and true convert.

As none can rightly guess at his happiness, who is assured of his part and interest in Christ, but him who has the same; so none but one in his case can be capable of thinking what pain that heart can feel who has backslidden from its first love, and forfeited the sweet company of the beloved Jesus. It is indeed a heaven upon earth, to be

be in his favour, and to walk with him in peace; and a nether hell to feel the Lord departed, and withdrawn, grieved away. Like as Mary was happy and blessed at her Lord's feet, while he said, "Thy sins, which are many, are forgiven thee;" and was as miserable when she could not find him, but thought him taken away, and so continued seeking and weeping till he appeared to her again: So a faithful soul is in his right mind, in his right place, and would not change states with an angel, while he feels the love of God which transcends and surpasses knowledge in his heart; but weeps day and night if he can but imagine he has displeased the Saviour, and cannot rest or be comforted till anew our Saviour smiles and visits him, and restores his peace. Then all his tears are wiped away, and he learns with a tender heart "to go and sin no more."

But now I must speak in the third place, of the reason and cause of all this blessedness; and this is the pure unmerited love of our Lord and Saviour Jesus. "Out of love to my soul, Hezekiah says, he cast all my sins behind his back." There can be no other reason assigned for it; it could not have been our righteousness; we have none. It could not have been our merits; he purchased it for us before ever we were born. It is, as I said, grace, free grace; and this is constantly taught in the bible.

This should make every poor heart leap for joy. For though you have no goodness, no sort of inherent claim to this bliss, yet you are invited to come and take freely of it; nor need you be

afraid. Jesus loves you freely, and though neither himself nor you can see any thing worth his notice in you, yet he loves you with everlasting love, and is not willing that you should perish, but have everlasting life. Come, then, all you that are poor in spirit, you that are self-condemned and guilty, you that are hungry, thirsty, and in want; yea, you worst of sinners, publicans and harlots, drunkards and winebibbers, sensualists and rioters; and above all, ye dear souls that have sought for righteousness under the law, with a troubled head and heart; and you that have been awakened to see your own spoiled and corrupted hearts, [so] that you have lost nearly all hope and courage; come ye to the Lamb, and he will ease you; he will undertake for you; he will cast all your sins behind his back, and put a new song in your mouth, even praises and thanksgiving to our God. O come boldly and in faith, nothing doubting. Open your mouth wide, and he will fill it. Ask any thing, and he will do it for you. Ask then the forgiveness of sins, and to be assured of your eternal happiness in him, and you shall receive it. So shall you be blessed here and for ever, and safe living and dying. Ye shall be witnesses of his love to your children, and to the rising generation; and in the Lord's own good time, ye shall go to him, and see him whom ye love so much here, and be for ever with him. Amen.

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F I N I S.

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By J O H N C E N N I C K. K

- “ The Lord said, take away the filthy garments. Behold I have caused thy iniquity to pass from thee, and I will cloath thee with change of raiment,” Zech. iii. 4.
“ We are all as an unclean thing, and all our Righteousnesses are as filthy rags,” Isa lxiv. 6.
“ Wo to the rebellious children, saith the Lord, that cover with a covering, but not of my Spirit, that they may add sin to sin,” Isa. xxx. 1.

THE THIRD EDITION.

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DEUT. XXII. II.

“ Thou shalt not wear a garment of divers sorts, as
of woolen and linen together.”

*** H *** E, who despiseth the law of Moses, or
thinks lightly of the doctrines there de-
livered, is mistaken ; nor can he rightly
understand the gospel, or value the
New-Testament, who does not esteem the Old,
since therein is hid much of the treasures of
the revelation of God, and which is only brought
to light and made manifest by the gospel.

In the law Christ is preached, but only darkly,
and the commandments, which seemed to respect
ceremonies and outward things, were not given
in vain ; for all things commanded by Moses were
shadows of the good things which came in by Christ
Jesus, and patterns or copies of things shewed
Moses in the mount.

We are told by the apostle, that the souls of
good men, before our Saviour, were shut up under
the law, and did not see the end of every com-
SERM. III. mandment,

mandment. Hence it was that Moses put a veil upon his face when he spake to the people; and his ministers, and such as are hearers of him to this day, use veils. The law is covered with a veil, the ark also, and the sanctuary were hid from the Jews by being veiled. The Holy Spirit would have us understand that this is not merely human tradition, but that himself has his hand therein, signifying that the veil is upon the heart where men see not farther than the law and its appurtenances. To such all is veiled and dark, and they see not the glorious end of the law, nor know their way to eternal life, but are perpetually in bondage under the yoke of Moses, without feeling the redemption of Jesus Christ.

There was however so much light shined in the law of Moses, as served to help on the pious worshippers in that time to faith in the Lamb of God, and which assisted them to pry a little into the great design the Almighty God had in saving the world.

The rigid prohibition and charge to abstain from blood had its good effect. Two reasons are chiefly assigned by the faithful and meek prophet, wherefore blood might not be eaten: First, because it was the life: And secondly, because blood made the atonement for the soul. No religious Jew could forbear to look upon blood as sacred, not only because of this so often repeated commandment, but also because he saw how it was blood that hallowed the altar, the vestments, and whatever was used in the service of God. All things were purged with blood; and though many found out, and spake of it, that God did not drink the blood

blood of bulls, nor could it wash out sin, yet they all could not see the unprofitableness of it; nor did any think worthily of it, but such who were inspired of the Holy Ghost, to look upon it as the figure only of the true blood which Jesus shed once for all; and these were persons who saw afar off the salvation; and who died in faith.

The doctrine delivered in the text, is yet more hard to explain, and not so clearly opened in the gospel, as many other doctrines, of the shedding and sprinkling of blood, sacrifices, &c. are: But yet enough is said by him who rent the veil in two from the top to the bottom at his death, and by his apostles, to make this dark law of use to us in this day.

This doctrine is one of the many, of which the christians seem to take notice. It seldom would come into our minds in our life, to scruple wearing a garment of woollen and linen together. They are often mixed, and worn by religious people, and men of tender consciences, who at the same time have no conviction that they sin; yea they would have but weak heads, should they believe nothing more was meant in this law than only to forbear wearing two sorts of stuff in the same garment.

Could I believe our Saviour would have me go in sackcloth, or be covered in any way particularly, however it might seem a needless scrupulosity, or ridiculous, I should think it my duty to obey. Wantonness and the gay spirit of the world has prevailed far upon the most of christian congregations,

so that it would be hard to find out those whose only ornaments are a meek and a quiet spirit, and whose only finery is the garment "all glorious within." But as the treating upon the dress and garb of christians is not my purpose, I shall only wish all the lovers of the plain Son of David, to follow him in all simplicity of dress and manners, and not to be ashamed of a God whose coat was without seam, and who did not conform to the fashion of a world which passeth away ; and so pursue my design.

The woollen garment in the text, is a shadow of the righteousness of the law or the righteousness of works ; the linen also is a shadow of the righteousness of faith, or Christ's righteousness : To speak plain therefore and after the manner of the gospel, the text teacheth us not to blend both together.

There are three sorts of preachers who receive the scripture and confess the God of Abraham.

The first are such as preach the law alone, and these are generally Jews, and men of their spirit.

The second sort are evangelists or true gospel preachers, ministers of the New-Testament, who preach only the Lord our righteousness, and who will know nothing among their congregations, and souls committed to their charge, but Jesus Christ and him crucified.

There

There are others, of which the world is now too full, who sin against the law, and against the gospel, blending both together, and teaching the people to wear the garment of linen and woollen, of all which I intend to speak freely.

I do not wonder that St. Peter calls the law a yoke, which neither they nor their fathers could bear, because it must have been so to them who heard not plainly of Jesus and his salvation. Who, under the law, could have any comfort when he knew he was under the curse as long as he continued not in all things of the book of the law to do them? The more sincere the more unhappy such were who served under the law, and heard of no way to heaven but a perfect obedience to all the ordinances of God.

The sacrificing their turtle doves, lambs and goats could not make easy the consciences of awakened and truly pious persons. Such as made no more of religion than only to hear the law, frequent the temple, observe the customs and traditions of the elders, who fasted twice in the week, and found out means so to explain the law, as to make a sincere, though imperfect obedience (as they termed it) the whole, such might content themselves under the law, and hope they were righteous and good, and in a safe way: But where men had no time to deceive themselves, but heard and knew the commandment was exceeding broad, judging the very thoughts and desires, and condemning, and sentencing such as broke the least tittle of the law in any wise,

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such

such could not but be unhappy, and have their heavy hearts sink when they heard a zealous lawyer thunder out the curse against transgressors.

Faithful ministers of Moses, and true preachers of the law must thus preach: 'If you have done ten thousand duties, fasted yourselves to mere skeletons, payed tythes of the herbs in your garden, attended night and day in the house of God, and shall have failed only in some little matter, you are cursed.'

If you have kept six hundred and five of the commandments, and shall have come short in the six hundred and sixth, you have the sentence of God passed against you, you are accursed.

If you have denied yourselves all the pleasures, and honours of the world for a hundred years together, and been without blame, and shall only have a covetous thought, you are in a cursed state, and condemned in the law.

If you have read and heard the word of God with reverence, obeyed all precepts, taught them to your family, wrote them upon the walls of your house, and upon the lintels and door-posts, bound them about your arms as the most precious bracelets, and hung them upon your foreheads, as the most costly frontlets and jewels, prayed often and long, in public and private, and should only take God's name in vain, you are accursed, and shall not be holden guiltless, you are undone and ruined.

If

If you had lived as righteous as Noah, Enoch, or David; yea if your holiness had been excellent and perfect as the cherub, and should have kept it to your last moments, and should then sin, all your righteousness is polluted, your holiness become abominable, you have forfeited your right to the blessings of God's covenant, you shall die, you shall surely die and be cursed of God.

“ If you keep the whole, and offend but in one point, you are guilty of the whole.”

“ Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things of the book of the law to do them.”

This is the doctrine of the law; and if it be preached, this is the right way to preach it. Those persons are to be commended, who know not Christ, who thus preach the law, and who thus echo the thunders of mount Sinai, and repeat its dreadful language; for this must alarm the soul, and concern the careless and sleepy sinner. But this way of preaching can set men beside themselves with very fright and terror, it can make them tremble and quake, and force them to cry out bitterly: It can make them dead to the law, i. e. without hope of ever being helped or getting to heaven by their works: It can convince them how bad is the nature of sin, which so brings the curse upon all who obey it in the least, but it cannot save. It can distress the soul, but it cannot deliver it. It can wound deeply, but not heal; bruise and make sore the heart, but not cure; shew the hurt and evil, but not make sound; condemn and curse, and doom to hell, but it cannot

release, or set a soul free, or help it a step forward to salvation.

When the religious and sincere persons formerly saw the end of the law, and heard its rigorous threatenings, they groaned under the yoke, and when the prophets mentioned the deliverance, or hinted at the coming of a Saviour, O how did they rejoice! They that before sat in darkness and in the shadow of death, and who feared eternal misery, obtained hope, and longed to see the days of the Son of Man, and to hear his redemption preached plainly; and though they could not have this privilege, yet as many as believed the Lord's report, died in faith, and escaped from under the fiery law and its curses.

But how much to be pitied are honest Jews, who aim at righteousness, and find all their efforts in vain; nor they alone, but all, in every religion, who have been taught to stumble over Jesus Christ, and to despise and depreciate his righteousness, and who are trying to erect the bable of their own; how must they shudder when they perceive the stirrings of sin in their members? for let them reason as they will with their own hearts, and try to quiet their guilty and condemned consciences, they must know sin is there, and will be like a canker at the root of all their piety, and, like Jonah's gourd, blast all their promises of being happy in eternity.

This is the case with all sincere people who follow after righteousness, and seek it by other means, besides our Saviour's death and blood. They

They are hewing to themselves broken cisterns that can hold no water. They are striving to make the Ethiopian white in vain, and attempting to get to heaven by another way than the ladder of Jacob, the gate and only door into the paradise of God, Jesus and his wounds.

I say, this is the case with upright souls, who either have been trained up in the false notion of being saved by our own works, or who have not heard of Jesus, but were kept blinded to him by the god of this world. For where ever men are, who fancy themselves righteous, or would have others think so of them, they should be told plainly, thou art a hypocrite; God, the faithful and true witness, has made thy false heart feel, many hundred times, that thy works are not perfect before him; thou art willingly deceived; thou art willingly ignorant of thy own lost state, and of true righteousness; all what thou hast is a mere cobweb, a painted sepulchre. Thou hast not even the woollen garment of the law, boast as much as thou wilt with thy prayers, thy charities, thy devotion, thy piety, thy knowledge, thy zeal, thy duties and obedience; thou art still a sinner, thy conscience shall be a swift witness against thee, the law shall pronounce thee accursed and worthy the damnation of hell. If thou hast not a better righteousness, thou never shalt enter the kingdom of God world without end; thou never shalt be saved, but perish with the righteousness in which thou hast trusted.

The true christian preacher is one whom the God of the whole earth, the Lord who gave the law,

law, has taught, and who is convinced that the law was given to make sin known, and to make it more exceedingly sinful, and that righteousness comes not by that means, but by Christ Jesus, who is become righteousness to every one that believeth; and having heard the gospel with ears to hear, and having understood the gracious sayings of Jesus, and been a witness himself both of the deplorable estate under the law, and the deliverance by the merits and cross of the Lamb, determines only to know and preach him crucified every where. To small and great he testifies, that Jesus Christ's righteousness, his obedience to death, his sufferings, and wounds, and blood are the only things that make a sinner clean, or cause him to stand boldly in the judgment. This is the only white linen, the only righteousness which the saints wear above, and which can make them beautiful and fair in the eyes of God Almighty, and in the sight of his holy angels. This makes the harlot fair in a moment; the polluted and defiled are herewith clothed, and the shame of their nakedness does not appear. Though their sins before had been innumerable, though they had not so much as the least shadow of righteousness, but were self-condemned and accused, though they might think, I am a cursed man; I deserve hell; yet let them put on the Lord Jesus, let them get into his wounds, put on his shame and sufferings, and they shall be altogether fair, their sins shall be for ever and ever hid, and their iniquities covered. This mercy is granted freely, this wedding-garment is bestowed out of pure sovereign grace on lost souls, and such as turn to the Lamb from the law. Jesus delivers them, that they shall no
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more be under the law, they shall be under grace. He stands their friend; he helps them and saves them from their sins, hell, death, and the law, and gives them eternal life.

This was his design in coming into the world; this was his grand purpose when he became man. He would first send his law, his holy and just law into the world; and by all means make the souls feel and see their sin, and the equity of his passing judgment upon all; and when the sinner is well apprised of this, and wants a Saviour, is dead to the law, has lost all boasting, and sinks down before God who made him, as a poor condemned criminal, then does the Holy Spirit exalt a dying Jesus before him, then does he glorify God his Saviour in his eyes, and make him look to the cross where his dear Lord bled to death for him. He takes the righteousness of Christ and decks him therewith; he eases his pained heart, and assures him of his being justified from all sin through his faith in the Redeemer. He has made him loath the filthy rags of his own righteousness in which he once trusted; he has convinced him the woollen garment of the legal obedience would not do; and then brings the best robe, the white ephod down to the foot, the fine linen washed in the blood of the Lamb, and puts it on him. Thus shall it be done to the man whom the King of saints delights to honour. O may you and I have this for our robe when we leave the world, and enter worlds to come! With this we might go through the valley of death chearfully and fearlessly, and in this enter the wedding-chamber, and stand before God without spot or wrinkle, or
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any such thing. This is that raiment so often mentioned in the Revelations, where God says, "Ye shall walk before me in white, &c." and this is that which the prophet calls "the covering of God's Spirit." This is the white linen which all must have if they would be saved, or go to heaven; and without it all else, however fair and specious, is faulty and imperfect before him, whose eyes can behold no iniquity.

This then is the doctrine of the gospel, the glad news brought us by Jesus; this is what has been hid from ages, and from generations, and of which the fathers and ancients, in the first four thousand years, got some glimpse, and were glad. This is what the patriarchs preached to their children, and of which the prophets searched, and wherewith they comforted the mourners in Sion.

Would to God all preachers and ministers would teach the same; they would teach sinners in the right way, and be the means of saving themselves, and the souls of them that hear them; they would deserve the characters of ministers of Christ and priests of God and the Lamb. They would finish their courses joyfully; and after their toil and labours were happily ended, they would go and rest with their chief Shepherd, and see him whom they had so loved, exhibited and exalted in the world, Jesus would meet them with a smile, and with "well done, good and faithful servants, enter ye the joy of your Lord!" So let it be with me and with you in your dying hours.

There

There are yet other preachers, who, in a measure, preach the law, and seem as if they believed morality and obedience were the only cause of our being accepted with God. They insist upon the necessity of making ourselves righteous, and doing our part, keeping the commandments, and attending the service of God, &c. but least they should awaken the consciences of those who hear them, or bring under a deep concern about their salvation, their poor hearers, they tell them, when you have done all you can, Christ will do the rest; he will make perfect your good works with his righteousness: you must begin and set about the work, by repenting and living a religious life; and if that is not sufficient, when you come to die he will supply the deficiency, and make it up with his merits. This is the smooth doctrine of our times; with this the soul is lulled to sleep and cheated: this is the new doctrine which is neither the law nor the gospel; it is neither the old covenant of works, nor the new covenant of grace, but made up of both. It is the device of man intirely, and cannot be found in all the scripture. It is taking the new piece of Christ's precious cloth, which he wrought out with so much pain, and sweat, and blood, to mend the old garment of our own righteousness. It is teaching men to make a garment of woollen and linen together. It is against the law; for that saith, "If thou continue not in all things in the book of the law to do them, thou art cursed." It is against the gospel; for that saith, "We are saved freely, not of works lest any man should boast, not by our righteousness, not of ourselves, but of the gift of God."

Satan himself contrived the doctrine which so many now teach in all religions; for let them differ among one another as much as they will about antiquities, numbers, habits, forms or orders, in general all are drunken with this wine of fornication of the whore. All in general try to patch up the false righteousness of works and duties, and foolishly hope our Saviour will accept it, and add his own merits and sufferings to make it complete.

The enemy, when he cannot hinder men [so as] to be altogether irreligious, has therefore invented this new religion, which is neither Jewish nor christian, and this has deceived the nations amazingly. This people drink in greedily, and this is every where known. Better were it for the propagators of it that they had never been born.

If they preached the righteousness of the law alone, and only aimed at what the Levites and priests aim at, they would do better than now: For did they shew out of the law, that whoso had not kept the law blameless, could not be free from the curse; did they affirm zealously, that without perfect and sinless obedience, none could be justified by the law, but was condemned, then their sincere hearers would be alarmed, they would awake and begin to ask, "What then shall I do to be saved?" They would be concerned indeed, and be driven to Jesus, weary and heavy laden, for mercy; the language of their heart, when they had seen how impossible it was for them to be saved by their works, since they had broken the law,
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would be, "Lord save me, or I perish!" But to prevent this, when a soul is a little uneasy about his present or future state, and wants advice, he is told, O do not be troubled, but go on in your good way, go to church, to meeting, to mass, say your prayers, and do nobody any harm, and God will accept you, and together with your sincerity, and his mercy, you need not doubt of getting to heaven.

This is crying peace when there is no peace, and healing the wound slightly. This is indeed daubing with untempered mortar. This is mingling the woollen and linen together, and making the commandment of God void by the traditions of men. This is the religion of the whole world. This is the false hopes of the so-called christian part of mankind, and is in effect no more than what the Musselmens or Mahometans profess; only with this difference, one party teaches our own goodness and the mercy of God through Christ, saves us, and [the] other party hopes through their own obedience and strict observance of the Alchoran, together with the love of God gracious and merciful, they shall enter paradise. The Jews, and poor blinded and benighted children of Israel, think they are Abraham's seed, and partly by keeping the law, and partly by God's mercy, they shall be gathered in peace to their fathers, and escape being cut off and destroyed from their people. The more bewildered children of Ham and Ishmael, the heathen, and such as sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, dream the same, for though conscious of their being sinners, and though sensible of their guilt, and dreading death, yet comfort

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themselves that God is good and gracious, and hope he will only punish such as have wholly neglected the law of nature, and despised altogether virtue and religion; and though their notions of God are innumerable, and often idolatrous, and very confused, yet this is the substance of their hope; and with this one could bear in such who have not heard the gospel, nor seen the scriptures; such thoughts are tolerable in men on whom the day-spring has not shined, and whose day of grace has not dawned, and it must be tolerable in this respect with them in the day of judgment; but for men called by Christ's name, and professing his merits, death and divinity, to have any hope but in his righteousness, is intolerable. To them are those words in full force, and are my errand to them, "Thou shalt not wear a garment of linen and woollen together." Thou shalt not mingle the righteousness of God our Saviour with thy own; thou shalt not rest upon both; either trust thy own righteousness, or his alone. Trust thy own, and thou shalt find what a broken reed, what a whited wall, what a sandy and false ground thou hast leaned on, and how dreadful thou hast been cheated: but trust in Jesus Christ, and lay hold on his righteousness by faith; let the Holy Spirit clothe thy naked soul with his white raiment, with the fine linen wherewith all the armies of heaven are arrayed, and thou shalt be safe; thou shalt find it a sure covering, long enough and white enough to hide all thy sin, and cover all thy iniquity, and to make thee perfect before God. Put on this robe, and thou art blessed, yea, and shalt be blessed for ever and ever; as it is written, "Blessed is the man whose unrighteousness is forgiven, and whose sin is covered."

If

If thou wilt know what is the only true Wedding-garment, and if thou hast no mind to be found naked and unclothed, when thou goest to another world, then arraign thyself, and call thy soul to the bar; ask thy heart, if indeed thou couldst venture into eternity with thy own righteousness? I will go farther, couldst thou die, couldst thou depart this day, and be content now to hear the trump blow the last loud blast, and summons thee to stand before the Judge of all the earth, and have no covering but the righteousness of thy own works? Yea, if thou hadst all the righteousness of Noah, Job and Daniel, and the obedience of every angel, and the good works of every saint, martyr, confessor and virgin that ever was, thou wouldst shudder to launch into the eternal world, nor couldst thou be safe in any righteousness but that of God's own, and which we receive by faith in him.

However the Lord approves of the faithfulness of his people, commends, and will greatly reward their good works and labours of love which has been done for his name's sake; however he praises such of his churches and children, whose last works have been more than the first, and blames such whose works were faulty; yet that righteousness which saves the soul, and that which he calls so, and is the only proper righteousness, is the obedience, sufferings, and merits of our crucified God and Lord Jesus Christ; and this is imputed to us by believing in him. This was the way in which the Father of the faithful found righteousness, and was justified in the sight of
God,

God, and in this only a soul can be cloathed at the great day. Venture who will to try any other, it shall be dearly repented, and cost them dearly. They shall only once be sorry for their rashness and presumption, and that will be for evermore. O do not let it be a light matter with you, whether or no this doctrine be true; neither be content to say Amen to it, but put on the Lamb and his righteousness, fly into his wounds, and cover yourselves up in his merits; make sure of his pardon and forgiveness, and obtain of him that raiment of which he speaks to the angel of the Laodiceans, that ye may be cloathed, and that the shame of your nakedness may not appear. Have you never made any shew of religion, but have lived altogether without seeking righteousness hitherto? Now let it be so no more; come now to Jesus, the Friend of publicans and sinners, and he who hanged naked on the cross will hide your shame. He was stripped to clothe you and dress you for his Father's house. Come to him with all your heart, sincere and willing indeed to be saved, and you shall find, notwithstanding all what men can say, your own false heart fancy, and satan suggest to the contrary, a God nigh, and not afar off, and who is a covering to his people.

Or, are you devout and religious? have you attempted by the law, and strove by works to become righteous, and when ye failed, patched up your rags with Christ's merits, God's mercy and the like? Have ye, to quiet your conscience, mingled the woollen and linen together? Now, then, throw away the linsley-woolsey cloth, the forbidden garment, the unclean and illegal dress, and approach

proach naked to him who cloaths the lillies of the field, and he will be your covering; the Lord God and the Lamb will be your shield; and in as much as you have obeyed him, and trusted his blood and merits alone, you shall see, for his honour's sake, for his word sake, and according to his eternal purpose, he will save you, and you shall appear at his wedding in linen clean and white.

You shall here, in this life, rest well persuaded and confident of his love, of your being pardoned, and cloathed, and blessed; and die when ye will, nothing shall part you from his love, ye shall go to him, ye shall follow him with that company which no man number, who are in white raiment, with crowns on their heads, before the throne. With whom may you and I have our eternal part. Amen.

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The Reproach of the Cross.

BEING THE 4455-28
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SUBSTANCE
OF A
DISCOURSE

DELIVERED AT
GLOONEN in the County of ANTRIM,
in IRELAND,

In the YEAR 1754. K

By JOHN CENNICK.

“ He esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt,” Heb. xi. 26.

“ God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified to me, and I unto the world,” Gal. vi. 14.

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LONDON:

Printed and sold by H. TRAPP, No. 1, Paternoster-Row. 1786.

The Report of the
COMMISSIONERS
OF THE
DISCOUNT

DELIVERED AT
GLoucester in the County of Ayrshire



BY JOHN HICKES

Printed by J. H. Hickes, at the
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LONDON: 1841

Printed and sold by H. B. Newell, at the
Printers, in the City of London.

HEB. xiii. 13.

“ Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach.”

✱✱✱✱ I ✱✱✱✱ It is in vain to hope to become true christians, and escape the shame of the cross of Jesus.

The whole doctrine of the Son of God's incarnation and death, when set forth in simplicity and plainness, and not preached with wisdom of words, has been always esteemed foolishness, and the believers of the gospel, and sincere professors of true christianity, have continually been accounted fools; and the more zealously they have confessed Jesus Christ for their God, and the more firmly they have been attached to his merits alone, the more the world have condemned and despised them, the more they have been made, as it were, gazing-stocks to men and angels, persecuted, reviled, rejected and reproached; and if pitied by any, it has been because (as they think) “ much religion has made them mad.”

Whoever therefore unfeignedly desires to be a christian indeed, must set his face as a flint against all opposition, and resolves to deny himself,

leave all he has, and take up his cross daily, and follow Jesus through a gainsaying and perverse generation.

There is no palliating the matter, or seeking to reconcile men of the world to our religion, without danger, as long as they are unenlightened from above, and stay in the course of flesh and blood, judging and weighing things according to rules of common sense and reason alone, and not according to the scriptures; they cannot be pleased with our manner of acting, our lives must seem madness to them, and our principles foolishness. Our faith must be exploded by all, and our practice condemned by all.

The many attempts made by great and learned men to make the religion of Christ coincide with the measures and minds of men, have been fruitless, it cannot be effected. The world, with all its customs, pomp, glory and pleasures, are at enmity with the King of saints; the spirit of the world is the enemy of him and our happiness; therefore it is so often repeated in the gospel, that whoso will be a lover of the world, or the things of the world, is an enemy of God, and therefore Jesus, when he makes men his disciples, calls them out of the world, teaches them, that neither himself nor his doctrine were of the world, wherefore the world hated them. He warns every where his people to leave all and follow him; to come out from among them, i. e. the world, and be separate, and not partake with their sins, that they might not partake of their plagues.

Those

Those are ministers of Laodicea who have a shew of piety and keep in with the world; and as long as they can please men they cannot be the servants of Christ.

How stupid are such who profess to believe in the Son of man, and who conform to the world? Or who would endeavour so to dress up the doctrine of our Lord and Master, or so speak of his person as to shun the infamy of being his disciples?

The world cannot love the doctrine of the Lord Christ. Sensual and carnal men cannot value the redemption: Lovers of pleasure, and covetous persons, cannot like the life of a christian; nor can wise men, and such as will be governed by philosophical principles, ever approve of our way. They will constantly find fault with us, blame us as weak and inconsiderate men. They will wonder why we act and believe so unreasonably; while the careless will condemn us altogether. The bigotted in every sect deem us heretics; our friends wonder why we risque thus our honour, name, character, and fortune; and all sorts will pour on us, from every side, calumnies, revilings, and charges innumerable; nor can we, by any means, satisfy them, or reconcile them to us, unless we even resolve to stay in the world with them, and suffer religion to lead us no farther than to put on the form of christianity, be sober, moral and moderate people, without being Christ's disciples indeed,

Since

Since then it is thus, since our Lord and Master has assured us it would be so, and since experience teacheth us daily the truth of his words, what shall sincere souls do? Why, for Jesus Christ's sake, that they may please him, and for their own sakes, that they may be saved, let them take his advice who is the Counsellor; let them escape for their lives, rise up, and at the loss of all things follow him. Let them "go out of the camp after him, bearing his reproach;" and remember, that whoso loves father, or mother, or wife, or children, or fields, or estates, or any thing else more than him, is not worthy of him.

Wherever we find honest men, or women, or children, who unfeignedly seek salvation, it will not be hard to persuade them to leave all for his name's sake, and to count the best riches and greatest honours, the most desirable pleasures, and plentifullest fortunes and enjoyments, but dross and dung that they may win Christ and be found in him. They can easily be brought to think, what shall it profit me if I gain the whole world and lose my own soul!

If they are in earnest to secure the love of Christ, and to gain the incorruptible crown, no persecution, or slander, or shame, or friends, or enemies, will be able to turn them back from pursuing their high aim; they can be content to be reduced even to beggary itself, and smile to become like their dear Forerunner, the scorn of men, and the outcast of the people. They can hear the blasphemy of the multitude, the songs which
drunkards

drunkards make on them, and not be turned back. They can hear opprobrious and cruel language from their once dearest friends, endure stripes and blows courageously, and without answering a word, and part with the best of fathers, the tenderest of mothers, and the most affectionate relations with dry eyes; nor be entreated to look back to all they have left in the sinful world,

The general received opinion of many is, that now in a christian country, we need no more to be thus resolute; that we may enjoy the world, and be not bad christians; that there is no necessity of laying aside the pomp and fashions of the cities, or forbear the lawful recreations of the times, that we may keep our friends and our religion too; and therefore the common manner of preaching, and what is almost universally approved of is, "Do thyself no harm; be not righteous over-much, wherefore shouldest thou destroy thyself?" And thus are many satisfied in a state of nature, to the last degree dangerous.

The world is the same as formerly, and no more now, than in our Saviour's time, can men be his true disciples, who are not persecuted by the world, and counted the offscouring of all things. The faithful ministers will be still reckoned babblers, deceivers, and men of unfair views, and every private christian will be partaker in bearing the scandal of the cross, and share the same of his Lord.

Who so values his name, his riches, his possessions below, will risque losing his part in a kingdom

kingdom above; and who so is determined to keep in with the world, must not be surprised if he shall wail with the kindreds of the earth in the great day of judgment.

Come, then, all ye who love the Lord Jesus, or wish to be among his people, behold the Captain of your salvation, and valiantly tread in his foot-steps. He has been made perfect through sufferings, and is now entered into his rest; be of good cheer, and go after him.

He has made himself of no reputation, who was from everlasting God; and who only is the Most High in the glory of God the Father. Let us then not think a moment on our own good name, but be content to have it stink in the earth, and cast out, if only we can but have it written in the Lamb's book of life.

If a king, an emperor, should stoop to be a beggar or slave, alas, where is the great humiliation? or if an angel should condescend to become a man, and be on a level with the poorest mortal under heaven, what is it compared with the humiliation of God our Saviour? He who thought it no robbery to be equal with God, and was in the form and nature of God from all eternity; he who created every thing visible and invisible, and is, and was, and is to come, Jehovah, God over all, blessed for ever, the same with the Father and the Holy Ghost; he who made and upholds all things, was meaner and lower than any man, and his form was that of a servant, in which he was yet more humble, and his face covered with shame

shame and spittle. He was counted a vagrant, a base-born child, unlearned, a blasphemer, a seditious person; a murderer was preferred before him, and no felon on a gibbet, no sacrilegious wretch broke on the rack, no gallows-bird condemned to die for rebellion, robbery and murder, was more infamous, or more abhorred than him. O who can esteem his reputation, when he views the Lord his God so disgraced and stripped of glory and majesty! Who can value his family, his pedigree, his learning, his estate, his gifts or glorious endowments, who lifts his eyes to the cross, or comes in faith to mount Calvary?

My dear brethren, we must not think to be great or wise, or admired in the eyes of the world; we are the poor despised followers of a man, who was accursed by his own people, the Jews; we are the disciples of a Lord, who had no where to lay his head; we are scholars of a master, whose life was taken from the earth in the worst pain and most shameful manner that men or devils could invent; we are the people and inheritance of that God, whom now thousands of those called by his name, are ashamed to confess; our glory, is his cross and sufferings; our only strength, is his weakness and distress; our boast, of his blood and wounds, and our only hope, his meritorious cries and groans, his bloody sweat and obedience to the death of the cross.

We are the foolish people who will know of no God but in him; we worship the Lamb that was slain, and believe unfeignedly that he who was

crucified is the only One in heaven, or earth, or under the earth, who can give us eternal life.

We credit his words, let them appear reasonable, or surpass reason as far as heaven surpasses the earth. His words are more to us than thousands of gold or silver. We are pilgrims, that are bound for the country to which he is gone, and will never sit down, or count ourselves at home, till we are where he is. We ask no other glory, seek no other honour, beg for no greater mercy to all eternity, than only to be with him. Hence it is, that we are so afraid of displeasing him, or yielding contrary to his loving warning, to the flatteries of a false blind world, wherein he is not beloved, and where satan's seat is. Hence it was that Moses refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproaches of Christ, greater riches than all the treasures of Egypt. So we are satisfied to be shunned and hated every where, and carry our lives as it were, in our hands, are ready every day to die for his sake, rather than not be his children indeed.

Those upright souls, those whom the holy scriptures frequently call perfect men, are a sort of living martyrs for his sake, and that they may please him, and be in body and soul acceptable to him; and this not [only] in respect of their suffering outwardly through friends or foes on his account, but in respect of the crucifying the old man with his lusts; every impure inclination every wish or desire, however natural, as men
call

call it, which is not comely in his eyes, is not spared, but nailed with his body to the tree! If a darling pleasure, a beloved and cherished lust stir or lurk within, though it would be as easy to tear out one of our eyes, or chop off our right hand, [it] is brought without mercy, and denied and killed before him; and the last day will make it appear how truly chaste, how faithful and clean they, who love Jesus in sincerity, whether married or unmarried, have walked in his presence in the world.

But the more true and faithful in this and other respects a christian is, the more satan will war with him, and stir up all he can to oppose him. His faith, his actions, his every word will be condemned and blamed; and there is no better way for him than to be heedless of all these things, and behave just so, as if he was going out of the gates of Jerusalem after his despised and suffering Lord, or as a wayfaring man, who passes through a strange country or town, hissed at and ridiculed by the inhabitants; his comfort must be, that he does not belong to the place, that he is here only as a foreigner, and will soon see his own land, be in his own continuing city, stand on his own ground, arrive upon his own shore, rest with his own dear fellow-pilgrims, the saints and martyrs of Jesus, who have gone before him through much tribulation, and are now got to the end of their trials, whose sufferings are over, whose bonds and imprisonments, whose shame and reproach is ceased; and what is still best of all, he shall be with his own God and Saviour, and be embraced by him, and honoured in presence of all those who sit

at meat with him. This, this shall be the happy finishing of their course, who have followed Jesus in the regeneration, and continued with him in his temptations and shame.

My dear friends, and you who are disposed to obey the call of the Lord your God, let me advise you, and even entreat you not to consult with flesh and blood, or be swayed by friends, relations, or benefactors, but with a single eye to please the God of your salvation, Christ Jesus, and with a whole heart, leave the world, come out from among them, and no more touch the unclean thing, and he will receive you: Dedicate yourselves intirely to him, who loves you more than a parent his only child, and depart out of the Egyptian estate, into which all flesh are fallen; and without reflecting on, or railing at others who stay behind, take up your daily cross, and, at all events and hazards, follow the Lamb.

Do not dream, after you have done this, that your self-denial, your recluse life, your forsaking the world, or abstemious behaviour, with your other pious and religious deeds, shall buy you heaven, or merit the favour of the Holy One. You are beloved freely. It is his nature to love and pity poor souls. His delight is in mercy, he waits to be gracious, and therefore it would be a sort of spiritual theft and robbery to ascribe, in the least degree, our safety, or future or present happiness, to our own goodness or obedience. All this is his free gift, and which he bestows willingly on all who seek it. All our Saviour calls you to, or asks of you, is to leave the world, to come out of
their

their noise and hurry, to lay down the weights, which have hindered ye to run the spiritual race, and break off the bonds of the customs and fashions of a sinful generation, and retire to enjoy the liberty of the children of God, who accompany him, and who sit down at his feet and learn of him, who insure to themselves a part and interest in his favour and love, and whose title to the kingdom purchased with his precious blood, is clear and sure.

It is a glorious and blessed privilege to be released from the lying vanities of men, and to be disengaged from their inconstant friendship.

Is a child of God anointed to preach the gospel to the poor? Is he a minister of Jesus, a servant of the sanctuary? let him wait on his office faithfully, but let him be aware of the rich and the great, for few of them choose to be the Lord's: Their promises, preferments and threatenings, he must value alike, seeking only, if possible, to observe who among them are not ashamed of Jesus Christ, but would fain be saved; such he must attend and labour with, without any view of reward or recompence, till the resurrection of the just; but his chief blessing and fruit will be among the common people, such heard our Lord gladly, and such as the rest of mankind deem poor fools, and weak, are the precious treasure of the church. Let the minister then only seek to please our Saviour, who is his Bishop and Constituent alone; let him keep clear from the blood of all men, and if he cannot win them by a loving, laborious, and servant-like behaviour, and if the
gracious

gracious words of Christ and his apostles do not prevail, let him not be bribed to prophecy smooth things, nor be over-awed to forbear to declare the whole counsel of God. Let his eye be on the strict account he must one day make, and while he remembers, with trembling, that the souls have been purchased with the Lord's own blood, and is thereby induced and constrained to preach and labour in season and out of season to gain them over to the Saviour, whose wandered sheep they are; let him on the other hand know, that by no art or cunning this may be effected, but in true simplicity and godly sincerity he must prevail and be successful, only by having his Master's presence and blessing with him; and to equivocate, or dissemble, or cry peace when there is no peace, would be cowardly to shun the reproach of the cross, and make his labour of no effect, it would risque his joy, and the present peace of his heart, grieve the Holy Spirit, and tempt the Lord, who hideth himself, to leave him in a cloud, or, as it is said in Jeremiah, to confound him before them.

That minister who is wise, wishes only to be honourable in the eyes of the Lord, and to finish his course comfortably; if he can but die in favour with his Master, and behold him smiling to receive him to his sabbath, if he can but say, in his last hours, I have fought the good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith, and feel within the testimony of a good conscience, and the love of God shed abroad by the Holy Ghost; he seeks no more, he has gained his Saviour's aim, and shall bless the day he ever was born.

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But are ye private christians, and not called to be prophets, but eased, and spared, and excused from such burdens? then let not your heads be filled with reasoning, seek not to be wise and full of words, but first and chiefly seek to be assured of your election in Christ, leave no stone unturned to make it certain that he has chosen you out of the world. Or, is it gone thus far with you? O then happy, happy, happy folk, whoever you are! leap for joy when you are slandered unjustly for his sake, or for the sake of the gospel; but take care that ye are not blamed deservedly, for this would be a scandal to your holy profession. Whatever is of good report, viz. industry, honesty, gentleness, lowliness, a willingness to help any one to the utmost of your power, rather suffering want than be indebted, or suspected on such accounts, glad to live plain in diet, and house, and cloaths, for the Son of man's sake, and labouring with your own hands to relieve necessitous persons, this is pleasing in the eyes of our Redeemer; but if men will despise you because you believe Jesus is your Lord God, because you pray to him, or because you adore him incarnate, or that you will allow of no real or true righteousness but his, nor will acknowledge any safety but in his wounds and under his cross; if, because you will know nothing, praise nothing, exalt nothing but the crucified Jesus, do not be dismayed; and should it happen that you should be hard beset with reasoning men, disputing and jangling persons, abide in your heart low at the feet of Jesus, let your answers be few, and always, It is written. Are you used cruelly? look to him who bore the contradiction

tradition of sinners against himself. Are you treated unjustly? commit your cause to him who judgeth righteously. Are you reviled? O! I pray you, learn of Jesus, to be meek and lowly, and revile not again. Do you lose much? It shall be restored to you again above. Are you brought to the bar, or before magistrates? Value it not, Jesus was there before you, and remember the good confession he witnessed, when he was accused by the high priest to answer, and which he also made before Pontius Pilate. Abide thereby, and know no other Lord, no other righteousness, no other good, accept no help, or right, but from him; and be faithful and true to him; so he will keep you in peace, which the world cannot give, and his joy shall be fulfilled in you. Should it lie in your power to revenge the injustice or injury done to you; for the Lord's sake do not touch it with the least of your fingers; but if your countrymen, or friends, or brother repent, forgive them; and if your enemies fall bound into your hands, forgive and loose them; if they hunger, feed them; and so bear with them, and all who are against you for your religion's sake, as Jesus bore with you in the state of your enmity.

Above all, be not shy or afraid of sufferings, or shame for Christ's sake. Our Beloved has told us how it will go with us, if we are his, that the world will hate us, that we shall be cast out for his sake, and our names be reproached on his account: but since so the prophets were treated, and since they have called the Master of the house, a Samaritan, (which, at that time, meant heretic)

a devil, a madman, a Belzebub, let us not mind it, if they thus call the children of his household. Do not, let it not grieve us too much, or afflict us too deeply, to be shunned, disowned, and slighted, or even to be wholly forsaken of friends and dear acquaintances; we only tread the steps of the believers in all ages; it is the highway wherein they walked who follow the Lamb, and are now entered their glory. Only let us cherish the blessed moments of intercourse with our Saviour; let us live with him, and continually be busy in pleasing him; let us be still and at peace in our hearts, through the witness of his Spirit, that he has forgiven us, and washed us in his own blood from all our sins; and by an uninterrupted communion and fellowship with him, we shall, without fear or amazement, be called home, and get out of the reach of every danger, shame, and misery. Now our first business is to know Jesus has suffered without Jerusalem, he has been deemed unworthy to live, and dragged out of their gates, loaded with sins innumerable, and with the curse and wrath of all his people; let us go after him; let us be the despised disciples of this dear and despised Lord. Let our lives be a pilgrimage to Calvary, and let our eyes and hearts be fastened on him till it can be felt within we are his redeemed-ones, and till our eyes so often red with weeping, and our hearts tender with feeling our sin and his dying and divine love, shew to angels and men we have been with Jesus.

We have hitherto been like soldiers, who have rested at ease in the tent while our Captain suffers in the field. Indeed we cannot help, he has

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borne

borne the heat of the battle, and has conquered;
but he gives us the honour to share his shame, and
the prize. Let us then go out of the camp to him,
bearing his reproach; let our songs of triumph be
his dying on the tree, and our whole religion to
love and live to him who endured the cross and
despised the shame for our sakes. To him be ever-
lasting praise and glory, Amen.

F I N I S.

20 MA 59



We have hitherto seen the soldiers who have
fought at sea in the east while our Captain has
been in the field. Indeed we cannot help, he has
been in the field.

The Widow of Nain.

BEING THE
SUBSTANCE
OF A
DISCOURSE

Delivered in * * * *,

In the YEAR 1755.

By JOHN CENNICK.

“ His compassions fail not,” Lam. iii. 22.

“ His mercy endureth for ever,” Psalm cvi. 1.

THE THIRD EDITION.

L O N D O N :

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“ Weep not,” LUKE vii. 13.

✠ ✠ ✠ **I**N the days of our Saviour's flesh, as
✠ I ✠ he was fulfilling his course, and walking
✠ ✠ ✠ about doing good, it is observed, that
✠ ✠ ✠ he not only preached in the synagogue,
or in the temple, or where great multitudes re-
sorted, but often-times seemed to go long journies
only to speak with few, or with single persons,
or to heal one sick, or to help a sinner ready to
perish. He must needs go through Samaria to
save an adulteress, and a few out of the city
of Sychar; he would go into Jericho to save Zac-
cheus, and be fatigued in a throng another time,
that one poor woman might touch the hem of his
garment; and on another day go to the pool of
Bethesda to heal one lame man; travel along the
road to help a blind beggar or two; and go into
Simon's house to give a wretched woman the op-
portunity to sit at his feet, and hear of and receive
his free forgiveness. All this serves to shew how
the Lord is of tender pity, and despises not the least
soul he made. This should teach his ministers
not to spare any pains or labour, though it should
be to toil and spend themselves in journies, by
land or sea, if only one single soul is thereby won
to the kingdom of God. It should also teach eve-
ry sinner, that though he may think little whe-
ther he be saved or not, and though he may un-
SERM. V. dervalue

dervalue his own soul; the Lord had not thought so, but spared no pains to redeem and make that neglected soul happy. Should a guilty and self-condemned man, or woman, or little child think, I am unworthy the Lord's notice, I am but as a piece of vile dust or ashes, and may justly be passed over unheeded by him that made me: He may learn from all these instances, and from all our Saviour's behaviour in the gospel, that our very hairs are numbered, and the least and [most] worthless heart is not rejected by him, or cast off, or forsaken because of his being good for nothing, and worse. A person used to affliction and crosses, can sometimes be tempted to think there is no help for me; the Lord has forsaken me; he has cast me aside as a dog; my God has forgotten me: for their sakes therefore he saith in the prophet Isaiah, "A woman can forget her sucking child, but I can never forget thee;" as if he would say, However small and mean thou art in thine own eyes, however despicable and invaluable in the eyes of others, thou art dear to me; I have esteemed thee precious; I have graven thee on the palms of my hands.

We were all to him like grasshoppers, and as a drop of the bucket, or as a little grain of dust on the ballance compared with his heavenly worlds and their hosts; but yet he would not see us perish as a thing of nought, but [from] the beginning his eternal mercies moved him to be our Saviour, and to help a people who had no other friend, and who could not help themselves. He saw us, as it is said in Ezekiel, "in our blood," i. e. in our sin and ruin, when no eye pitied us,
nor

nor could do any thing to wash us or cover us; and he had compassion on us; and though he knew he could have made a better world with a word, and though he knew what a poor unthankful race we should prove, it did not shut up the bowels of his everlasting love, but he would become our Saviour. Nor this alone, but if only one soul had sinned, the least and poorest that ever was, rather than that soul should have perished without any means of help, he would have as freely left his throne, and suffered, as for all the whole creation. Who can read the gospel and not see that this is his very heart? If a Magdalene came weeping behind him, he was overcome, and must pardon her. When a dying rebel after all his blasphemy, and hardened behaviour, began to relent and beg to be remembered in his intercession, his heart yearned, and he took him strait into his favour. The tears and distress of Saul made him hasten away Ananias to speak comfortably to him. Even the outward troubles and sicknesses which oppressed such as he saw in the streets, or who came to him, so touched him, that nothing is more frequently repeated all through the gospel than such expressions, "Jesus had compassion on him; I have compassion on the multitudes;" and he bids the dæmoniac tell his friends, how the Lord had had compassion on him; and this tenderness of nature made him heal all, of whatever disease they had, whether it was, spiritual or bodily, so that the report of his merciful behaviour was blazed about, insomuch that when they came to be helped, and could not get to him for the press, or were blind, and could not find their way to him, or were lepers, and were afraid to come near to him, they

they cried out, "Jesus have mercy on us!" Lord have mercy upon me! Lord pity me! intimating by the very manner of their speaking, that they had been told of his tender behaviour to others, and begged the same grace; as if they had said, Lord Jesus! thou hast helped others in their deplorable state, O help us! O have mercy on us too! Indeed all our Lord's words, his actions, his carriage, proved him to be the same proclaimed of old to the fathers, "The Lord gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great goodness; him whose compassions fail not, he whose mercy endureth from one generation to another.

Though he is and was a just God, yet he delights in mercy, and is touched to the heart with the miseries of his poor people. How far this has been visible, we may see in his behaviour at the grave of Lazarus, when he saw the grief of the two sisters of the deceased, and beheld one weeping at his right hand, and the other at his left, his meek heart melted, and Jesus wept too. He considered their distress, and remembered sin had been the cause of all this trouble. Had there been no sin, there could have been no death, nor sorrow, nor sighing; therefore his friends and enemies, his angels and apostles could see how God pitied his children in their fallen state, nor did he cease groaning in spirit before all the Jews, till they observed it, and said, "Behold how he loved him!" And when nothing could dry up the sister's tears whom he loved, but recalling of their brother, he made use of his Almighty Divinity, and spoke him again into life.

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But though this was a most special mark and proof of the Lord's great tenderness and pity, there is in the word preceeding the text, another edifying and singular relation of Jesus Christ's tender mercy, which I shall this day speak of, and must pray all to hear with the utmost attention.

As he was one day entering the city, called Nain, with many of his disciples, and many other people, he met at the gate of the city the corpse of a dead man, whom they were carrying out to his burial, and many of the people of the city attended the solemn procession. The man was the only son of his mother, and she was a widow; and it appears by what our Saviour spoke to her, that she followed her son weeping and lamenting greatly. This sight so effected the Redeemer, that it seemed hard to say who felt most, the childless mother or the God who created both; he could not suffer to see how the tears run down her aged cheeks, nor could he bear to hear her sobs and sighs; as the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and went up to her, and said, "Weep not," and stopped the bier, and called back the young man, and gave him alive to his else inconsolable mother. This whole account has somewhat extraordinary in it, so that I am obliged to expatiate a little on it, and call you to look on and consider it. I have no doubt but this was one great end, if not the only one, the Lord Jesus had in coming to Nain, namely to comfort this poor widow. He knew when her husband was called from her, and knew she had been a woman of a sorrowful spirit, and met with many sharp and

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cutting afflictions and trials, but was comforted in her child, who was, in her widowhood, in the stead of a husband to her, and who, perhaps, was not only her only son, but the last child she had living, and as Benjamin was the darling, and, as it were, the life of good old Jacob, so was this man the life and comfort of his mother, and her heart seemed wrapped up in him, so that when he was taken away, she became desolate indeed, and of all women the most miserable. All this Jesus knew, and in the multitude of his mercies resolved to comfort her, and at the same time let her know the Lord had had compassion on her, that so she might not only receive back her son, but feel and know her Maker was her husband, who had seen her affliction, and was come to deliver her; but he suffered it to go far before he interposed to relieve her. He often lets things go to the farthest, and when, to all appearance, there is no remedy, he makes bare his arm and stretches out his hand to save; and this he does that we might know our help standeth in the name of the Lord that made heaven and earth. Thus oftentimes it seemed as if the children of Israel in their battles would be totally defeated and overborne by the enemy, but when they cried to him, he soon made all their adversaries know, that the God of Jacob was Almighty, and, had as it were, the strength of an unicorn. So when Peter seemed ready to sink, and was just on the brink of being drowned, Jesus stretched out his hand and saved him: and thus he does by many hundreds and thousands in the time of their trouble, he lets the souls come into extremity, so that they can feel and know that no one less than God Almighty can help them, and then
makes

makes his grace and power known in helping them; and this he does for his own name and honour's sake, that we might give him his due praise, and not fancy we have helped ourselves, or that our case was such, that out of it men or angels could have redeemed us. No, all who are saved in Jesus, have first felt and been convinced by the Holy Ghost, that without him their pain was perpetual and their wounds incurable.

After this his wonted manner, then, he dealt with this widow. It was the custom of the Jews to have their burying-places without the gates of their city; and no sign of help appeared, till the woman was just come to the place where she was to take the long farewell of her child, her only son.

I dare say, before Jesus met her, had any looked on as she passed the streets of Nain, they would have seen her wringing her hands, with her grey hairs hanging over her face, while floods of tears flowed down from her swollen eyes; I suppose many of the people, who followed the corpse with her, strove to comfort her, but all was in vain. It was to her as if the whole world was dead and lost to her. Methinks I see her striking upon her breast with utmost grief, and bemoaning her hard fate; methinks I hear her say to those that would have comforted her, O call my name Marah, for God hath dealt bitterly by me. It has pleased him to take away my husband, and now, in my old age, when my son, my only son, should have supported and been a comfort to me, lo! he has cut him off and left me desolate with-

out a friend, or husband, or child, to go down with my grey hairs in sorrow to the grave! O my son, would to God I had died for thee, my son, my son!

Jesus felt her pain and anguish, and hastened to meet her. He might think, this will be my poor mother's case not many days hence; Joseph is gone, and when she beholds me dying, a sword will pierce through her soul, and force her to cry out like this poor widow who is in bitterness for her only child. Thus can he pity one who loses his friend, and that widow who must follow her last child to the grave. Thus he can pity a child who loses a dear parent; and much more can he pity such as feel the loss of his presence, and who mourn for him whom they have pierced, as one mourns for his first-born.

I had said that Jesus felt her sorrow ere she appeared in sight; but what his heart endured, or how deeply he was touched on that account, none knew till he drew nigh the city-gate, and then all his disciples were witnesses how much it affected him, for "when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not."

O! methinks I see the dear Lord Jesus with the tears ready to burst out of his own eyes, going up to the woman; methinks I see the concern of his heart in his meek looks, and hear him saying, O do not weep, thy cries cut my very heart; I cannot bear thy tears; I know thy forsaken state; I know thou art desolate, and hast lost thy only son, but I will give him to thee again, only be comforted

forted and cease thy lamenting ; thy God has compassion on thee ; he pities thee and loves thee ; “ Weep not,” but wipe away thy tears, and lift up thy drooping head, thy son shall live again, I will raise him up, and thou shalt know that the Lord has seen thy affliction, and will ease thee and comfort thee.

I doubt not but at first the woman could not hope, but thought it far too good news to be true, till she saw Jesus stop the bearers of the corpse, and he came and touched the bier (and they that bare him stood still), and he said, “ Young man, I say to thee, arise, and he that was dead sat up, and began to speak ; and he delivered him to his mother.” In this miracle the Godhead of Christ shone forth bright indeed ; for when the prophets did their wonders, or performed any great cure, it was done in the name of their God, they generally called on the Lord, and let all see it was not by their own power that the sick were cured, or the dead raised. Thus the apostles used the name of the Lord Jesus, and in his name did all their miracles, and ever preached it, “ Be it known unto you all, that through Jesus Christ’s name is this man made whole ;” even our Lord himself in doing many of his amazing works, in his usual humiliation, prayed to his Father, and learned obedience, as if he had been a servant ; and this was seen in a measure at the resurrection of Lazarus, for he looked up to heaven and besought his Father to hear him before he called the dead man to life ; but in this account, as the Lord and God of the living and of the dead, he demands the prey out of the mouth of the lion, as
it

it were, and death knew who spake, when he said, "Young man, I say to thee, arise:" And death delivered up his captive at his word. Thus shall it be in the last day; no sooner shall he, who is Lord of death and hell, command both to give up their dead, but all that are in their graves shall hear his voice and come forth. This act of our Saviour's, as well as the manner in which he did it, like the raising of Lazarus in much the same way, must then be our invincible argument, that he is the resurrection and the life, and that neither death, nor the grave, nor hell, nor satan, nor any spiritual bondage, nor sin, nor darkness, nor misery, nor fear, nor pain, can confine a soul a moment longer when he says, "Loose him and let him go." This must teach us in all times of trial to apply directly to him. Are we in bondage through the fear of death, or through the sin that most easily besets us? he only can say, be thou loosed from thine infirmity, and it shall be done. Are we drawing near the time of our change? He that tasted death himself, and met it in its most frightful dress, and who sunk down into it, surrounded with all its terrors, he can order it so, that we shall not be holden of death a moment, nor so much as see or taste of it, but have it so sweetened and altered to us, that it shall be only like the open door out of our exile and banishment into the chamber of our Bridegroom, and into our everlasting rest.

Satan and death would laugh to scorn all our courage, and mock all our resolution and bravery, if Jesus did not arm us with his armour, and with divine authority make his voice heard.

I say

I say unto thee, Death ! and to thee, Hell ! hurt not mine anointed, let my servant go free.

And when the young man was raised to life, and sat up in his coffin, he began to speak, and his mother began to praise the Lord ! He had turned all her mourning away in a moment, and instead of the voice of weeping and lamentation, there was heard nothing but the voice of thanksgiving and rejoicing. I do not doubt but the Holy Spirit, who had made her sighs so prevalent, before now made her see who Jesus was ; all glorified God, and many of them that were witnesses of this charitable and merciful miracle, thought a great prophet is risen among us ; but it seems as if more was meant by that remarkable expression used by some, " God has visited his people." Who knows but this tenderness of our Saviour was the means of saving eternally the mother, the son, and many of those who were at this happy opportunity ; for I cannot help believing that our Saviour, who so pitied persons in sickness, in bonds, in pain, in sorrow, which were only temporal trials and burdens, much more pitied their spiritual estate, and often made these the means of bringing them to him, and humbling their souls at his feet, that he might make them know who he was, and that he might give them eternal salvation.

All the many examples and proofs of his love to the children of men, are therefore noted and handed down to us, that his long-suffering might lead unthinking and careless mortals to repentance, and comfort such as are in distress, and encourage

courage them, with all their afflictions and miseries, to go to Jesus, who was and is acquainted with grief, and whose delight and pleasure is to deliver such as are ready to perish. O let it have this effect upon us in our trials. Let us remember the Lord has compassion on us, and he [who] would go to Nain to comfort a poor desolate widow once in the days of his flesh, is the same now, and will surely comfort us. All the afflictions, misfortunes, or grievous things which befall us in this world, are known fully to him, and when they have served the end for which they were sent or suffered, he delivers us out of them. Be not any of you therefore cast down and dejected too much, when your dearest relations are called away, or when all things seem to make against us; do not rashly conclude the Lord deals hardly with you, or that he resolves to make all your days bitter through afflicting visitations, crosses, or troubles, but learn, that your good things are in a better world, and rejoice, that though heaviness may endure for a night, joy shall come in the morning. Let your disappointments below wean you from having any confidence in flesh and blood, or in any thing earthly, for all are transitory, all perish, and the most promising blessings in the world, without Jesus, are splendid lies and painted bubbles. Live you as men who have built your house upon a rock, which no wind, or storm, or flood can move, undermine or shake. Since Jesus the Lord has compassion on you, why need you be uneasy if you are used unkindly or cruelly in the world; and since he will be better to you than a father or mother, or (as Elkanah told his wife) than

than ten sons, do not be dismayed, should all you have be taken away. The Lord is the same, and when the heavens and earth are changed, and when time is no longer, he will be your everlasting God, and your portion forever.

But there are some who grieve and will not be comforted, and who are not concerned after losses, nor mourn because of any outward want or trouble, nor because their friends, husbands, wives, or kindred, or only children are dead, but because they have a heart dead to God, and who feel themselves without true life in Jesus. This is a state common to all who are awakened, and who feel the plague of their own hearts: In this condition a soul can say with the Psalmist, "My sore ran in the night season; my soul refused comfort." Such are restless indeed, such never can rest till the Lamb of God has given them a rest for their souls; they mourn, and their mourning is for him whom they have pierced, and just as a parent laments for his first-born, or like as the widow of Nain mourned for her only son, so they mourn and languish for redemption, and day and night cry out for God their Saviour; and are there any here in this case? let such know that his heart, who was so affected and touched with the woman's cries and tears, will in like manner meet them and comfort them. Thus he overtook the two brethren who were walking sad to Emaus. He comforted them, and did not leave them till all their sorrow was turned into joy. Thus he met Magdalene in the garden, when he asked her, "Woman, why weepest thou?" She had scarce time to tell him; she mourned her absent Lord, but Jesus called her by

SERM. V.

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her name, and at once made her heavy heart leap for joy and gladness. The women who went weeping to the sepulchre, were told by the angels not to fear; for, said they, "Ye seek Jesus that was crucified." They knew all who looked with tears for the Lamb that was slain should surely find him. Let me in like manner then comfort you. Go on weeping after him; let not your heart or eyes rest till the moment comes when Jesus shall reveal his love to you, and bring the times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. While you are waiting upon him, let his compassionate behaviour to the woman in the text encourage you; let his promise be a staff, as it were, to you; and in all your deadness of heart, in all backwardness to believe, heaviness of spirit, or desertion, sit low at his feet as objects of pity and compassion, till he say to each of you, as he did to the widow's son, "Young man, young woman, I say to thee, arise." At his word all your sorrow and sighing shall flee away, and you shall rise up to life eternal; you shall begin to speak and shew forth his praises, and tell to others what the Lord has done for you, and how the Lord, your own Lord and God, your own God has had compassion on you. May he do this for you all, to the glory of his great name, whose redeemed people and inheritance you all are. Amen.

20 MAR 59

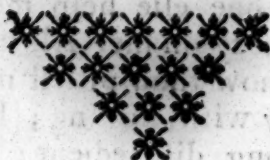
F I N I S.

A P R A Y E R.

O THOU merciful and compassionate High Priest, who has experienced and known all the infirmities and sicknesses of thy people, and who has pity on the ignorant, and such as are out of the way, and art ready to save all who are friendless and ready to perish; look upon me, behold a poor sinner at thy feet who cannot do without thee. I am undone; I am uneasy and dissatisfied; my flesh and my heart trembles because of my sin, and I cannot be comforted. I cannot rest, nor sleep, nor wake, nor live, nor die in peace, till thou assurest me that thou hast forgiven me. Say to me as to the widow of Nain, "Weep not." Still the tempest in my breast, and grant me that peace in thee which the world cannot give. See the restless condition of my heart, and for thy tender mercy's sake grant me such a confidence in thee that I may trust and not be afraid. I know I have sinned against thee, but O have compassion on me I am nothing but sin, and unworthy and worthless, and neither can any one else help me, nor can I help myself; have mercy on me. All my desire and wish is, to feel and know thou pitiest me, and wilt save me. I am weary with sinning; I am sorry that I have lived so long disobedient; I repent (O my God! my God, thou knowest my inmost heart; thou knowest I repent), and beg for pardon. Think upon Gethsemane; think upon thy distress and agony; think upon thy uneasiness and frights in the wilderness; remember thy sorrows on Mount Calvary; remember thy wormwood and the gall;
and

and for thy sufferings sake, for thy bitter torments
 sake, and for the sake of thy name, thy love, thy
 death, thy wounds and miseries, save and comfort
 me. Teach me to wait upon thee without distrac-
 tion, to be faithful and true; cause me to cleave
 to thee, and never go away; and make it so clear
 to me that I am thy beloved, and thou mine, that
 all afflictions may be light, and easy borne with a
 patience becoming a soul who is called by thy
 name. Thou who art easy to be intreated, and who
 canst not send souls empty away, fulfil my desire,
 that I may love thee, and live to thy praise, and be
 a witness that thou hast visited thy people, and hast
 power on earth to forgive sins; yea do this for
 me, that I may glorify thy dear and holy name for
 ever. Amen.

20 MA 59



The Beatific Vision; or, Beholding JE-
sus crucified.

BEING THE ^{4455. a 8}
₂₀
SUBSTANCE
OF A
DISCOURSE

Preached in
BALLYMENAGH, in IRELAND,
In the YEAR 1755. ^K

By JOHN CENNICK.

We see JESUS, HER. ii. 9.
Blessed are the pure in heart; they shall see GOD,
MATT. v. 8.

THE THIRD EDITION.

LONDON:

Printed and sold by H. TRAPP, No. 1, Pater-
noster-Row. 1786.

The Pacific War: or, Beholdings
and cruelties.

BEING THE
SUBSTANCE
OF A
DISCOURSE

Preached in
St. James's Church,
London.



By JOHN H. ...

We are told, that the
... the ... of the ...
... the ... of the ...

THE THIRD EDITION

LONDON:
Printed and sold by ...
... 1795

JOHN i. 29.

“ Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the
sin of the world.”

✱✱✱ OUR Saviour calls John the Baptist one
✱ O ✱ of the greatest of the prophets, and
✱ ✱ ✱ that, no doubt, not only on account
✱✱✱ of his abstemious life and renunciation
of the world, or because he was a martyr for the
sake of his testimony, but because he, of all the
goodly company of the men of God, was the only
one who survived till the dawn of the days of the Son
of Man, and saw the Lord in flesh. Other pro-
phets and holy persons, since the beginning of the
world, had the favour to see in spirit the king-
dom and redemption of Christ, but they saw afar
off, and though they knew God would surely visit
and redeem his people, and published the glad ti-
dings to all who mourned in Zion, or looked for
salvation in Israel; and though they were per-
suaded of his incarnation, or, as they termed it in
their predictions, his tabernacling among us, tho’
they foresaw how, by his death, he would abolish
death, and by his sufferings heal the hurt of his
people, and save the world, and could die in this
faith rejoicing; yet none among them had the
honour to see him like John, or to be able to say
boldly, while he could point to him, that is the
“ Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the
world.”

SERM. VI.

John

John Baptist had been inspired with the Holy Ghost in his mother's womb, and had so early leaped for joy at the approach of his Lord, God, and Master, who was then newly conceived in the virgin Mary. He had retired early into the desert, convinced of his high errand to proclaim the coming of the Lord, and to prepare his way. He had baptized the inhabitants of many countries to repentance, and set them upon expecting one greater than himself, preaching that they should believe on him who was then among them, but not yet manifested, who should baptize with the Holy Ghost, whose shoes latchet he confessed he was not worthy to stoop down and unloose; but all this while he was not sure of his cousin, the Son of Mary, was he, till at his baptism in Jordan, and then the Holy Spirit descended upon Jesus in form of a dove, while a voice from heaven assured the Baptist, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased." Till this time John had many disciples, who, with himself, waited for the Messiah to be revealed; but now John pointed him out to all his converts, saying, "Behold the Lamb of God!" See the Lamb God has prepared to be offered for the sins of the world. Ye have hitherto read the law, and been present at the sacrifices, and at the morning and evening oblation: ye have known with what solemnity the beasts have been appointed to be slain on the days of atonement, and heard your fathers tell how, after the same manner, they offered their goats and lambs for four thousand years: Behold now the true Lamb; all the rest were the patterns, but this is the substance. The others were but shadows, and were the gifts and

and offerings which men made out of the best of their flocks upon the altars of God; but this is the Lord's own Lamb, this the Lamb which he prepared, and the body which he ordained to be offered once for all. Behold him, turn from every other sacrifice, and expect your help and atonement and forgiveness from this Lamb. He shall take away the sin of the world. Thus the disciples of John understood it, and they left him and followed Jesus.

The whole gospel is included in the declaration of John; and by him, God the Holy Ghost has begun, and continues to exhibit and set forth the Son as the Lamb, whose death hath abolished sin and taken it away, teaching sinners to look to him and be saved. Thus the prophets had, in their measure, preached him, and all the scriptures set forth remission of sin in this Man's name, and in no other. All the divine missionaries have, in other words, more or less plain, declared that he takes away sin, and finishes iniquity, and that to him every one must look, and all flesh come, who would be saved.

Three things especially are contained in the text, namely, the character of Jesus Christ; his office; and [the] way to be saved by him. Of these let us think a little, and learn rightly to esteem that sacred Person, whom John in the text, and whom all the scriptures preach alone.

The first thing to be considered is, his character; the Lamb of God. John the Baptist was not the first who thus names the Saviour, for Moses in

his dark manner had preached him as a Lamb, throughout the law, and even the fathers had thus offered lambs as shadows of him, from the days of Abel. Isaiah had said, "He shall be led as a lamb to the slaughter." And again, "Send the lamb to the ruler of the people." But after John had called him a Lamb, the apostles, through the same spirit, spake of him under that name. St. Peter says, "Ye were redeemed with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." St. Paul calls him, our Passover, our Paschal Lamb, sacrificed for us. Thus St. Philip preached him to the Eunuch; and St. John the evangelist, who had seen him in his glory, and well knew what name best suited him, who is not ashamed to appear in heaven as a Lamb that has been slain, in his whole book of the Revelation, calls him the Lamb, the Lamb that was slain.

There could be given many reasons wherefore the name of the Lamb so becomes our Saviour: First, because of his innocency, his being harmless and meek; for as the lamb is without any thing of the fury, poison, or ravenous disposition of other animals, so that the least child is not afraid to approach it, or the most timorous to be where it is; so Jesus is of such a tender lamb-like disposition and nature, that the most affrighted and fearful soul may approach him, and come into his presence without danger. At the time when the antients looked upon him as a lion, by which name he was known in Judah, and in many ages; no wonder that Hezekiah and others so trembled before him, and poor sinners were afraid lest, as a lion, he would tear them to pieces,

pieces, when there was none to help. But now those gloomy times like shadows flee away, and as John himself looked to see the Lion of the tribe of Judah, and behold he saw a Lamb; so all who approach Jesus, and apply with fear and trembling to him, however they may justly expect to meet him as a lion, since they are conscious of their having so grievously sinned and offended him, yet they shall find he is now a Lamb, and now fury is not in him; he is come not to destroy men's lives, but to save them; and such as are not cruel and lion-like to themselves, shall find nothing in Jesus but mercy, and love, and gentleness for ever.

There is another reason why our Saviour's name may well be called the Lamb; for no creature of God is more useful than a lamb, their flesh is meat, and their wool our best raiment; thus is Jesus our meat indeed, the only flesh that gives life to the world, and his righteousness the fleece of the true Lamb which can hide sin, or cover a naked soul, or dress it for the King's marriage-supper.

But the best reason that can be given, why the Lord delights to be known by his new name, the Lamb, is because from the beginning of the world, lambs were used for the sacrifices. Lambs were used at the deliverance out of Egypt, and for the consecration of priests, and for the daily sacrifice. Thus is our Lord Jesus incarnate called the Lamb, by way of eminence, as if all the rest were nothing, and unworthy of the name; he is properly the Lamb; the rest were but faint figures,

and no sacrifices which could take away sin, make peace or atone for our fall, or avert the just wrath of Almighty God.

This could only be effected with a better sacrifice, and with a better Lamb than men could offer, or present to the Most High. Now, this God himself found out a Lamb, he prepared a body, and offered up his own eternal Son, his dearest Lamb, his coessential and beloved Child. This is the Lamb of God, the Lamb he gave up to die in the room of a sinful creature. God will have it now known, that his Child Jesus is the very and true Lamb, the antitype of all oblations, gifts, sacrifices, and offerings, and the fulness and substance of all whatever the law or the prophets preached.

I come now, of course, into the office of this holy Person, which was, to take away the sins of the world.

God Almighty saw eternally through the insufficiency of all human performances, presents and attempts to remove sin, and too well knew how far sin had reigned over the earth, and how deeply it had stained, poisoned, and corrupted all flesh, and merited divine wrath, to propose that mere man should make an amends; he knew no blood of lambs, nor all the offerings under heaven could atone for iniquity, or make an end of sin: Wherefore he found a ransom, and contrived the incarnation and dying of a Lamb that could do it, and save the world. "Lo! I come, he saith, to [do] thy will, in the body which thou hast prepared

prepared me." It was a secret to many in the world, and the more is the pity, it is a secret still to some thousands, how the sin of the world is removed and taken away. Men confess it in words, but O! they think little more of the matter; for else all would go weary and heavy laden with sins to him, and be witnesses that he takes away the sin of the world. I shall not enlarge much on the manner of our Lamb's taking away sin, because I have done it in other discourses, and because my design is to speak more especially on beholding the Lamb: But yet I may not altogether pass over the dolorous life and journey of Jesus, when he went out of the gates of Jerusalem, bearing our iniquity, to carry it into a land uninhabited, and to release the guilty world. In doing this work, it became him to put on a nature lower than the nature of angels, that he might die, who else could not die, and that in making atonement, and satisfying for sin, he might be capable of suffering the utmost of all our chastisement, stripes and judgment; and this he did undergo, feel and endure in his own body and soul, when it pleased the Lord to heap upon his head, and charge, and lay on him the iniquities of us all. Then did it also please the same God, even the blessed Three who bear witness in heaven, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, to bruise and afflict the Well-beloved and innocent Lamb, who now stood in the sinner's place, and willingly bore their guilt, and became their surety. One man had brought sin into the world and ruined it; and this Man, the very image of the invisible God, and the only blessed Person in whom God is manifest to men,
meekly

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meekly

meekly undertook to take sin away, and set all the world to rights.

He was not only treated as a sinner by Jews and Heathen, who attended at or consented to his death and bonds, but God the holy and undivided Trinity so condemned and visited sin in his person, that in heaven, as well as in earth, it could have been said with equal propriety, "He was numbered with the transgressors." He was made sin for us; he was a curse on our account, and for our sakes.

This was the solemn and awful manner in which the Lamb removed the sin of the land, in one day; thus the Lamb of God took away the iniquity of the world: He saw contentedly, all whatever could be called sin, in the sight of Almighty God, was now laid upon him; and then he humbly, and like a lamb stood silent, and resisted and answered not, when the rewards of sin flowed thick upon him from hell, from men, and from heaven. No blows, shame, injury, pain, reviling, blasphemy, terror, or even hellish distress could make him speak or cry aloud; he went out of the city of Jerusalem like a sheep going to the shearer, dumb, and bore his hateful and hell-deserving load like a lamb, so he opened not his mouth. He had took the debt upon him and would pay it; he stood surety for his world, and would satisfy the Creditor; he was the sinner's bondsman, and would be answerable for all their guilt, past, present and to come: and as he was the God of equity, so he did justice; and having fulfilled the law, and made it honourable, he submitted

mitted meekly and lamb likely to its fiery and terrible, but just sentence. Thus he bought the church; thus he obtained pardon, and with righteousness demanded all out of the possession of the enemy of our souls, and out of the reach of the thunders and condemnation of the law and divine judgment.

When he had stood out the storm, and languished on in his torments until the last pain and sorrow was inflicted, and till he had drank up all the wrath which remained due, knowing that all things written of him in the Psalms, and in the prophets, and in the law [were fulfilled], he sunk down and died, when he cried with a loud voice, "It is finished." Thus he carried away all sin out of the sight of his heavenly Father, and in his own death slew and destroyed sin, death, and the curse, and abolished and blotted out the bills and bonds which were against us, and so opened a way for us to escape out of our prison and chains into eternal life, and into the glorious liberty of the children of God. Then hung the Lord's Anointed truly like an ensign in the air, on the hills, a spectacle to angels and men, naked, and wounded, and dead. Behold him, all ye who love him! Behold the Man, whose dying saves you! Behold your King, who bled and suffered in the room of his rebellious and guilty subjects. Behold your God, who thus humbled himself to redeem his creatures. "Behold the Lamb that takes away the sin of the world." O may we have our eyes like those in the synagogue of Nazareth, fastened on him; and even after we have viewed him,
by

by faith, all our life-time, may we see him that was slain, in peace and in his glory for evermore.

I come now to shew what is meant by beholding him, for this is the way to be saved.

This, as well as his death and sacrifice, had its figures under the Old Testament; for when the Children of Israel in the wilderness were stung with serpents, and could get no cure, but the whole camp were in the utmost distress; Moses lifted up a serpent of brass, high in the midst of the congregation, and preached, that whosoever should be bitten or poisoned, should look to it and be cured. Those who slighted this remedy, died without mercy; but as many as raised their eye to the serpent, were immediately healed, so that it stayed the plague, and eased a confused and despairing people of all their pain and fears. Of this our dear Saviour takes particular notice, in his conversation with Nicodemus: and thus, he says, "shall the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoso looketh and believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Moses might not make the image of a man, and put it upon a cross, but the likeness and pattern of that nasty creature which had stung them; to signify, that as sin had stung us, and been the sole and only cause of all our inward or outward pain, as well as the reason of all calamities and complaints, temporal and eternal, so Jesus should be made sin for us, and be lifted up in the shameful and loathsome manner of a criminal, a naked, cursed, and defiled man, from whom all hid their faces; but whosoever believes in him, whosoever

whosoever looks upon him in faith, and sees all his sins transferred on his head and staining his raiment, he obtains deliverance, the pains of Christ eases his heart, his bonds loose him and let go free, his cries quiet him, his wounds heal him, his blood washes him from all sin, his dying breaths eternal life into him, and his shame and nakedness covers him with the true wedding-garment; his curse blesses him, his condemnation acquits him, and his servitude and slavery adopts him a son and heir into the family of the King of kings and Lord of lords. See first, if there be any sorrow like unto his sorrow, where-with he was afflicted for our sakes, in the day of the Lord's fierce anger; and then look to him and be saved, "Whoso looketh on him shall not perish, but have eternal life." Those willingly ignorant of his divinity and merits, who, out of pride and Turkish haughtiness, scorn to apply to him, or to bow down at his feet for mercy, but choose to believe in some more reasonable and fashionable way, are those who, like their brethren in the wilderness who despised the brazen serpent and died, must perish; their blood is upon their heads, in the sin, in which they have sinned, they must die.

The prayer which *Solomon* made at the dedication of the temple, must not be forgotten in this place, for in no part of the Old-Testament service, was the looking to Jesus for salvation more divinely set forth than there.

The temple itself was the shadow of Christ; for which reason in the gospel, he calls his body the temple; and John, when he saw heaven,
 SERM. VI. P beheld

beheld no temple in the holy city, or New Jerusalem, but says, the Lamb was the temple thereof. All the nations esteemed the temple of Solomon, as the throne of God, and thither the tribes went up as to the gate of heaven, to offer sacrifices, and to seek forgiveness, and set their faces towards that temple, when they prayed or made their supplications. Solomon, in his inspired intercession on the solemn feast day of consecrating the house of God, intreats the Lord to hear the men who shall turn from their sin and make their prayer towards that place, and to forgive them; and in case of famine, pestilence, mildew, locust, or invasion of enemies, in the time of sickness, or when any man has known the plague of his own heart, and should spread forth his hands towards that house, that God would hear from heaven and forgive; also he begs, that if a stranger, an alien to Israel, should hear of the Lord who dwelleth in Jerusalem, and should come and pray towards that house, that God would hear and grant all the desire of the stranger; and if his people should go out to battle, and should pray towards the city, and towards the house which was built, that he would maintain their cause; and he closes this manner of praying with this most remarkable petition: "If thy people sin against thee, for there is no man that sinneth not, and thou be angry with them, and deliver them to the enemy, so that they carry them away captives unto the land of the enemy far or near, yet if they shall bethink themselves in the land, whither they were carried captives, and repent, and make supplication unto thee in the strange land, saying, We have sinned and done perversly, and committed

mitted wickedness, and so return to thee with all their heart, and with all their soul, and pray unto thee toward the land, which thou gavest to their fathers, the city which thou hast chosen, and the house which I have built for thy name; then hear thou from heaven, thy dwelling place, their prayer and their supplication, and maintain their cause, and forgive thy people that have sinned against thee: And the Lord said, I have heard thy prayer."

Thus Daniel, in the captivity, opened his window and looked toward Jerusalem, when he made his prayer; and David and such as compiled the Psalms, who saw in faith somewhat of this mystery, said, "I will pray toward thy holy temple: I will look to the hills, whence cometh my help."

This looking and expecting mercy and deliverance from the temple, or, as it is elsewhere called, the holy place of Sion, was no human invention, but ordained of the God of Israel, to be a figure of the faith afterwards to be revealed. Now the veil is rent asunder, and the apostles and disciples of Christ have spoken plainly, that the object of all our worship, the true temple, the true place of help, is Jesus Christ, who was crucified on the hills, and set as an ensign, that the scattered and dispersed of Israel, and the nations of the Gentiles might seek to him. Let us look to Jesus, saith the author of the epistle to the Hebrews; and the prophets, who saw before-hand his salvation, taught, "Look to him and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth;" and again, "Behold your King;" and again, "They shall look upon him whom they

pierced, and mourn for him ;” and again, “ Look to the Rock whence ye were hewn ;” and again, “ Turn ye to the Strong-hold ;” and again, “ As the eyes of a maiden to the hand of her mistress, so do our eyes look unto the Lord our God, till he have mercy upon us.” As the lame man looked upon Peter and John, expecting to receive something from them, so a sinner must look on Jesus, and know no other can help or relieve him to all eternity : he must behold the Lamb. This is the sweet gospel of glad tidings ; when a soul is oppressed, is over-loaden and bowed down with cares, sin, and fears, the Holy Ghost bids him behold the Lamb of God. This is the prescription all true physicians give to the souls under their care, let their case be what it will, however sad and deplorable, however distressed and tempted, however sick, tired or faint, however hurried, pursued by the enemy, or avenger of blood, however seemingly incurable, look to Jesus ! behold him ! behold the Lamb of God ! those open arms are extended to embrace you ; that pained breast was made bare, that you might lean there and be comforted ; that cross of his was raised up to screen and shelter you, like a great tree, from the burning heat of the wrath of Almighty God ; those wounds are the cities of refuge, set open that you might turn in and be safe ; that reverend head was bowed down to listen to your complaint and sighs, and those dear lips stooped to kiss you, the blood which runs down from all parts, from head to foot, hastened to make a river of life, that you might drink and live for ever, that you might wash and be clean. O go to him, venture near him, spread your hands and hearts towards this temple,
make

make your prayer towards this gate of heaven; and apply fearless and with trust, to him who was lifted up and slain, and you shall find help. But are you carried away captive by sin so far from him, that you cannot come to him? yet, remember the hills, turn to Mount Calvary, and make your prayer looking towards Jesus, desire him to take away your sin, and he who can do it alone, he who is mighty to save, he who supported the whole world's crimes and bore them away, will let you experience what his out-stretched arms, his pierced hands and almighty blood can do. Behold the Lamb of God; look to him till he have mercy upon you: and sooner or later, as surely as he is God's holy Lamb, he will be your Saviour and Redeemer, and you shall glorify him.

All our christian service and worship is, Beholding the Lamb. As formerly, if an heathen who had heard of the fame of the God of Jacob, and had travelled some thousand miles to Jerusalem to see their worship, and was returned to his own country, was asked to give a relation of all he saw, he could only have told what a multitude he saw together worshipping, how the psalms were sung in pious order, and how the trumpets and harps played with solemn awfulness, while no image no vision appeared, no God shewed himself, nor any similitude was to be seen as the object of their pompous and grand worship, but the priests and people all surrounded an altar, whereon a lamb lay bleeding or burning: Thus it is in our days of grace, when we meet together, when we sing or pray, we have no other thing in view, we turn in faith to none else,
but

but to him, who is the image of the invisible God, the dying, bleeding, and crucified Lamb. It is with us, as if we celebrated our daily or hourly service on Mount Calvary, and compassed round about the altar, whereon our Passover was slain and sacrificed for us. Our office is to be priests to him, our white ephods are his righteousness, our robes are made white in his blood; him we worship, him we preach, to him we sing, to him we pray; we will know him only, and are, and will be to all eternity, the inheritance and worshippers of him that was slain. Those who have found redemption in his blood, abide with him in white and clean linen, with songs of everlasting joy; and such as seek salvation, look to him and pray; and all have their eyes and hearts fastened on the Son of Man, the Lamb who takes away the sin of the world.

Thus John saw it in the New Jerusalem above, all the angels' innumerable host, the four full of eyes, the four and twenty upon thrones, the souls of the martyrs under the altar, the virgins on Mount Sion, and all the company, which no man could number, who stood round about the throne, worshipped and sung, and fell down and adored and blessed the God and Lamb that sat thereon, whose vesture was dipped in blood, and who appeared as if he had been a Lamb slain. They praised him on whom they had believed in the world, and who had loved them, and washed and made them clean from their sins in his own blood; and no one else was visible, none else is seen of the angels, or can be seen to all eternity, but that God who is manifest in flesh, that man
 "in

“in whom dwelleth the whole fulness of the Godhead bodily,” in whom the Father is revealed, and from whom, and in whose name the Holy Ghost is known and glorified, that Lamb that was slain, he “that was dead and is alive again,” and liveth for evermore. Out of the person of Jesus, God dwells in inaccessible light, whom no man hath seen nor can see; but in his face and in his faith, the pure in heart see God, even the Father, and live.

Let us, dear brethren, only be solicitous then about seeing Jesus; let our whole sincere and serious aim be to believe in him, to look upon him in faith, that we thereby may escape the danger of perishing, and find eternal life and the kingdom of heaven. Let us not forget that we live in a bad world, in spiritual Egypt and Sodom, where also our Lord was crucified; many, on all sides, still are offended with him, and others ashamed to confess him for their God; the professors as well as profane, are displeased with our manner of believing on the Lamb. Let us not wonder, but pass through among such as esteem the preaching of his cross foolishness, and such as deny the Lord that bought them, professing before heaven, and earth, and hell, that we are the disciples of the Lamb of God, that we follow him, and will only and alone know and set forth him till we die. Our eyes shall be fastened on him, we will look to him in all times of need; we will praise and pray, looking to him crucified, till we behold the Lamb of God face to face in heaven, where I pray him to hasten our appearing, for his blood's sake! Amen.

F I N I S.

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O F
E D W A R D L E E,

A M A L E F A C T O R,

Who was executed at Haverford-West, in Wales,
for a Robbery.

In a LETTER from the late Rev. Mr. CENNICK, to
his Friend in LONDON.

L O N D O N:

Printed and sold by H. Trapp, No. 1. Pater-noster-Row,
near Cheap-side. 1789.

[Price Three-pence.]



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1900-1901

A C C O U N T, &c.

DEAR BROTHER,

May 1, 1753.

FOR these two posts I have neglected to write, because I longed to see an affair accomplished, the relation of which will, no doubt, give you to partake with me in inexpressible thankfulness. I have therefore copied my journal, though I have been busied the whole day, and am quite fatigued and weary, and it grows late. I shall therefore begin from Thursday the 26th of April.

IN the afternoon, after I had earnestly wished to see one Edward Lee, who was condemned a few days ago for a robbery, I was brought by brother Sparks's means to him. I spoke freely with him of our Saviour, and told him that he himself had once suffered the death of the tree, and had pardoned a malefactor who suffered with him; and wished he would apply to that dear Redeemer, and get forgiveness at his hands, before he should be obliged to leave the world, &c.

HE behaved very sullen and stupid, and would scarce speak, and answered nothing; however, I prayed with him in an earnest and hearty manner;

but he sat still, and did not offer to kneel. My heart was open, and felt a near access to the Lamb; which, I believe he also felt, for he desired I would visit him again; which I promised, and so took leave of him for the present. Hence I visited a justice of the peace, who lives opposite to the gaol, and is friendly to us with his whole family; afterwards I walked out alone in the Priory-fields; at seven I preached on the "Good Shepherd, who laid down his life for the sheep."

Friday 27. For these two days I have not been well with a cold, but to-day I found myself better, and walked out early in the fields toward St. David's, where I spent an hour with the Saviour about my heart, and returned to Mr. Sparks, where I breakfasted, and spoke with a young man who is under solid conviction. At eleven I walked out to dine at a cottage in the country, about two miles from town. In my way I walked among the ruins of St. Mary Magdalene's church, and visited a poor family, who live in a hut built in the old walls. I had with me two companions, and about twelve we came to the place where we dined, called Jeremiah's castle, it is just like one of the poor Irish cabbins, built with mud, but neat and clean; and here lives a pretty family of our people, with whom we spent some hours in a very comfortable manner. When they come to the meetings, which they daily do, they lock up the door, and leave the rest to the care of our Saviour.

At four we came to St. Thomas's, to see one Owen, an honest downright man, out of the Welch parts. Here several of our friends met us. We sung some hymns, and spoke with much simplicity
of

of our happiness in Christ, and how miserable a soul can be who leaves him, or acts unfaithful to him. At the usual time I preached from that text out of the epistle to the church of Smyrna: "I know thy poverty, but thou art rich."

Saturday 28. WE intended to have visited our prisoner again, but the jailor was afraid to suffer us, because a minister had told him, if we came, he would come no more. Brother Sparks waited on the sheriff, Mr. ———, about it, who said, he thought the more ministers and good people visited the prisoner, the better. He gave an order in writing to the jailor, to let us see him. He was in a poor melancholy condition, and answered to all we said, in a low broken tone, with many sighs. I begged him not to conceal any thing which might be of any benefit to himself or others, but make a confession of all which burdened his conscience; which he said he would do in writing before he died. I spoke again to him of our Saviour, with a burning heart, and assured him if he would go to him with all his guilt, he would get pardon. We sung also some verses with a tender feeling of grace, and in the same spirit prayed and wept altogether, and felt the Lamb quite near us. We recommended him now to Christ's bleeding wounds, and took leave.

ABOUT ten o'clock I set out on foot for Pembroke, a brother brought me forward as far as Claristown, near five miles, and then returned. Afterwards a poor man overtaking me, conducted me quite to Pembroke. We waited an hour at the ferry, but yet got in before appointed, and at seven
had

had a most lovely meeting in a room, which was quite full to the door.

Sunday 29, I PREACHED at eight, and had still a larger congregation. Hence we walked about six miles to Claristown, and had in our company sixteen on foot, besides some on horseback, who followed us. At Claristown we met several from Haverford-West, and I preached in the open fields, to about seven hundred people, on the parable of the prodigal Son. After dinner we hastened to town, where at five I preached the third time this day, on the open quay, to a serious congregation, on these words, "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost. It was an awful sight to see the ships full of people, listening to the gospel, and though many sailors were present, yet all behaved exceeding well. We had purposed, with the Owner's leave, to have preached in the castle, but as it was so near to the Methodists, lest any should think we did it to draw their people away, we altered it out of good will. At seven I met the society, spoke to them freely, and sung near an hour, which also was a happy meeting.

WE now visited the prisoner again, and I had never more liberty to speak with him. He was quite free also and open, and told me he believed at times that our Saviour loved him, but a sense of his sins made him afraid. We spoke comfortably to him, and prayed with melted hearts and eyes to the Lamb for him, and he, poor heart, kneeled down, loaded with chains hand and foot, and joined with us in a sinner-like manner. We kissed him, but could hardly part; but promised
to

to come again to-morrow. At parting, he put into my hands a whole sheet of paper, wrote full of the most remarkable bad deeds of his wicked life, which had been abominable and without measure. It was noised soon about, and at night the sheriff himself came to desire a sight of it; to which I consented, upon his promise, that none should see it, or have it out of his hands, till after Lee's death.

Monday 30. ALL night I slept but little, and dreamed and waked with all my thoughts taken up about the prisoner. I went with the sheriff and brother Sparks to visit him, but was not easy till I could be with him alone; and accordingly got an order from the sheriff to the jailor, to this end. I was near half an hour with him; he opened his heart quite freely, and answered all I wanted, but could not enough thank me for my care of him. I asked him how he felt in his heart? He said, "Last night I thought I felt more of our Saviour's love, than in my whole life;" but because of his many great sins, which crowded often on his mind, he soon became again disconsolate. I prayed with him after the sheriff and jailor came in, and sung that hymn, "Jesus my light and sure defence." Some scores of pious people waited without doors under a window, where they could hear distinctly, and joined with us with many tears. We now prayed the sheriff that as few as possible might be admitted to see him, because it disturbed him. Now we returned home, and at five the sheriff came to us again, and gave us all the liberty we could desire to visit the prisoner. Afterwards I visited a Quaker, who had this morning hastened from Carmarthen,
that

that he might see and pray with the prisoner. I related to him, his mother and wife, what had passed, which filled our eyes with tears; at seven preached on, "For this cause was the Son of God manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil," with uncommon demonstration of the Spirit and power of God. And when I prayed for him appointed to die, (which I did with all my heart) I believe no dry eye could have been seen.

AT nine we went to the justice, where we waited for the sheriff, and with him went in alone, and spent about an hour with our prisoner. He said, I am glad you are come, I have longed for you; and could not enough shew his joy, that we were again with him, and sung some of our hymns, which were in a penitential strain; then we made an hearty prayer for him, accompanied by many, who stood without, weeping; and once more we recommended him to the Lamb. But I saw he had no mind to let us go; my very bowels yearned over him, and I could contentedly have staid with him all night.

MAY 1. BEFORE six we called up the sheriff and visited the prisoner again, for I could not rest till I was with him, and my heart had been without ceasing speaking with our Saviour for him all the night. And this morning he sighed when we came in, and told us he had never known such a long heavy night, or felt so before, the guilt and weight of his sins. An horrible dread had overwhelmed him, and his heart sunk within him, he was like one distracted and ready to perish, with almost all hope vanished; so that our early coming
was

was an unspeakable blessing to him. We received from him a paper wherein he enlarged his confession, and by some pretty expressions betrayed that the Holy Spirit was at work with him. I took and copied it; then read it with what I had copied before, and desired him to alter any thing which was wrong or misunderstood; but he signed it, and said it needed no alteration. One of our people came now and shaved and washed him. Mean while I read the whole fifteenth chapter of St. Luke, how "all the publicans drew near to hear him," and made observations on all the gracious words of our Saviour in the parable of the lost sheep, and prodigal Son, to which he attended with streams of tears; before we parted, we sung some hymns and prayed in a blessed manner; but he was so drowned in tears, and trembled so that he could scarcely kneel upright.

BUT now the happy moment came for his deliverance; the thankful remembrance of which so affects me, that I can scarce write for tears of joy; he said, as he felt his heart released, "Now I believe there is mercy in store for me; now I believe I shall be saved; my fear of death is gone, and I feel such comfort, which makes me believe I shall never be afraid again." As he had, of his own accord, wished to have the sacrament, and the receiving of which is commonly looked upon as a mark of repentance; so I prayed the sheriff to desire the minister of the parish to give it him. Mean while we were at Mr. W——, the justice, and breakfasted. As soon as the minister was gone, the prisoner sent for us, and now we (brother S—— and I) were locked

in with him alone, and nobody offered to disturb us.

As soon as we entered, he smiled and said, he could not help sending for us, and counted the time long while we were absent. I said, O we are glad to come, and have just parted with many christian friends, who are weeping and praying for you to our Saviour. With shame and humility he thanked them. I told him, I cannot tell you how all the children of God hereabout love you, and how many thousand prayers are made for you without ceasing. We sat down close to him on his straw, and looked upon him and spoke with him with pleasure. O how did his countenance alter! his dark hardened look was gone, and the mark of the Lamb shone out of his face; so that we could say little, but weep together with him for joy. He said, "Now I believe all the darkness and sorrow is at an eternal end. I should rather have suffered this shameful death in any other place, than where I have been so well known; but I believe God has ordered it on purpose out of mercy, that I might hear of him and be converted." He repeated what a troublesome night he had had, and what fears and terrors had oppressed him: but rejoicing said, "Now it is over! I am no more afraid, there is mercy in store for me." He told us also his escape out of the prison at New-York, and how he was forced to live upon berries near a month in the woods, before he got to Philadelphia, whither he travelled by night, and how near being destroyed by serpents he had been several times, and many other surprizing passages of his life he told us, with the deepest sense of the tender mercy

mercy of God, and thankful now that he had saved him to this time. Between whiles we sung here and there verses, which he had marked in our's and Watts's hymns, such as, "Go forth to Calvary go," &c. "The soul of Christ me sanctify;" and sometimes I read to him part of the scriptures, especially the history of our Saviour's sufferings, till to the pardoning of the dying thief, which affected him so much, that I stopped, and he prayed, "O say to my soul, this day shalt thou be with me in paradise;" which, he said, I believe will be so.

THUS we spent our time till the clock struck eleven, and then he said, with a composed countenance, "In about an hour I hope to be with our Saviour." We told him, you will love him much, because he has forgiven you much; and no doubt you will be ashamed to see him, when he meets you with many angels to bring you home. "O, said he, I am unworthy of his grace. I shall be ashamed to see him, I know I have deserved eternal torments; but I believe there is mercy for me, the devil has no more to do with me." I asked him, if he would like to live longer? "No, said he, I now long to be gone, and in a little time I shall be at home." For my part, I could have joyfully gone with him, and even longed for it: When you see the Lamb, said I, then think of us, and I believe you will soon see us both with you. He wept, and said, How glad shall I be to see you.

AND now the prison-doors were opened, and the noise of the crowd, and the sight of a vast guard with swords and staves might have shocked

him; but he never changed his countenance or shuddered, but behaved with such a lovely spirit, as I would wish in my last moments. When his chains were sawed off, and his arms pinioned, we kneeled down once more together in presence of all the officers, and besought the Lamb to attend him with his angels to the end, &c. Then we kissed him, and he us in the tenderest manner. So I at his right hand, and brother S—— at his left, we walked out of the prison all the way with him. The constables and officers took great care to keep off the horses and mob, so that we could talk to him, and sing, as he leaned upon us through the streets. But the more affecting part was, the blessing, when so many prayers and tears were poured out on both sides the way, from all the people, till we came to St. Magdalen's-hill, or, as it is called, Marlin's-hill, about half a mile out of town; he thanked the people for their love and good wishes, and, with a modest and lovely aspect, passed on chearful. As the way opened, and we could see such astonishing crouds of spectators, I put him in mind, thus was our Saviour led to his death for you, only he had no such attendance of friends in his shame, &c. Then we sung, "The Lamb with all his grief and smart," &c. "The blood-sweat trickling down thy face." When we had come so far as to see the gallows, then he looked up and said, "I have deserved it long ago, but now I am just at home, I shall soon be out of all my shame and misery."

As soon as we came under the gallows, the constables cleared a large circle for us, and when the sheriffs and gentlemen on horseback had commanded

manded silence, I gave out some verses of that hymn, "O thou that hearest when sinners cry," &c. and concluded, "The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost—will see thou never shalt be lost." I asked him, if he had any thing more to say to the people? He said, no. Then I spoke out and said:

THE poor prisoner has already made a general confession of his unhappy life, and I have given it to Mr. Sheriff, who will make it public. He says, all what is written is true, and believes his death is the just punishment of his crimes; all you can do for him, is to join in praying for him till he has left the world.

WE then kneeled down with him, and prayed to him who once hung on the tree for us, and desired him afresh to forgive and absolve him, and grant him his peace, and open the way for him, which no man can shut, into the kingdom of God; to comfort and kiss him, and to take him home.

THE many thousands on horse and foot who attended, as well as sailors, ship-builders, and others, from whom one should scarce expect it, wept during the prayer beyond measure; and when I said the Lord's prayer, they all joined with the heartiest Amen I ever heard. Then I gave him into the arms of our Saviour, and blessed him in the name of the Lord Jesus, and of the blessed Trinity, and laid my hand upon his head while the tenderest tears trickled down his face.

WHILE the executioner was preparing the rope and raising the ladder, we sung some verses, and then

then fell on his neck before all and kissed him, and he hung upon me with a feeling which I cannot describe. Brother S—— also did the same, and then he cheerfully mounted the ladder, after I had once more kissed him. He was dressed quite neat and clean, his look melted all who looked on him. He said, "Pray do not be troubled for me, but take warning by me, both old and young; I shall now soon be at home, and am not afraid to die, because, though I believe I am the greatest sinner in the world, yet there is mercy for me. I hope, if there be any here whom I have wronged, you will forgive me, and I heartily forgive all." Seeing the gentleman he robbed last, namely Mr. J——, he spoke to him, and desired his pardon; who answered, he forgave him. And then he thanked the sheriff for his kindness to him, and desired he would take care to see him buried; and then last of all he looked with such a cheerful look on us, as I cannot forget, and said, "I give you many thousand thanks for your love and care bestowed upon me; may the Lord reward you!" We blessed him with all our hearts, and then he pulled the cap down his face and prayed in secret; but some sentences I heard distinctly, as, "Receive me to Abraham's bosom! let me be with thee this day in paradise! receive my spirit, dear Jesus, for I am coming to thee! I have no righteousness of my own, but the righteousness of the Son of God; therefore receive my spirit," &c.

AFTER he thus prayed a quarter of an hour, he dropped his handkerchief, as a sign when he would be turned off; but the executioner not observing it, he had it given him again, and soon after he dropped it a second time, and lift up his hand and said,

said, "Lord receive me," and was turned off. But while thousands of tears flowed from all faces, we stood looking on with unspeakable tenderness, till his breast had done heaving, and then chose to retire. A constable was so kind as to clear our way, and so we came home, though others of our friends staid and saw his corpse laid to rest in St. Thomas's church-yard.

THUS, my dear brother, I have sent you an account which will no doubt sound of mercy and judgment; and the blessings ever since are seen from the eyes of some hundreds of people in and about this town.

I AM quite tender with the living sense of the mercies and grace of our Saviour through the whole, and had it been only on this poor man's account, I would not but have come hither for all the gold in Arabia. I am

Your loving brother,

J. C.

The

The CONFESSION of EDWARD
LEE at *Haverford-West*, May
the 1st, 1753:

I Believe I was born in London, about the year 1729, and left very much exposed from my infancy, by being sent to nurse to persons who took no care of me, but who beat me continually, and almost half starved me; and this, together with my natural sinful inclination, put me upon doing many acts of pilfering and stealing, which at last proved my utter ruin. The history of my bad life would swell this my confession to a large book; with the particulars of which I will not trouble the world, but the most material of my crimes I will acknowledge with shame, and beseech all others who hear it, to take warning by my misfortunes.

THE first fault I remember to have been guilty of, was stealing some brass out of a man's pocket, to the value of six-pence, for which I was severely corrected, which for a good while deterred me from doing the like. But as I observed before, the ill usage I met with where I was nursed made me often run away, sometimes staid from home two or three days together, and often without a mouthful of victuals. Sometimes I staid a week away, but at last went off entirely, returning no more.

I was

I was often in the practice of stealing, sometimes I went into houses, and took victuals and cloaths, or whatever I could find, till that old proverb was verified in me, He first steals the egg, and then the hen.

IN this employment I went on, sometimes at sea, sometimes on shore, till about the year 1745, I was apprehended, and put into gaol at Monmouth, for stealing money and cloaths; at the assizes I was ordered for transportation for seven years, and accordingly I was sent over to Virginia, but I soon made my escape from thence, and got to sea; continued abroad with good success a good while, and returning to my own country I forbore my thefts entirely, till I broke my leg at Swansea, which reduced me to poverty, and then I thought to help myself by my former unjust measures, in which I was discovered and confined in Carmarthen gaol, I think in the year 1748; there I broke out of prison and got off. Yet I did not take warning from all that had hitherto happened, but in a short time after broke open a gentleman's country-house in the north of England. I also committed other thefts of the same kind, and escaped all justice. I had taken out of the compting house near fifty pounds in money, which served me a long time, and gave me such courage, that I would no longer think of working, or putting myself into a way to live, but spent money and time in all sorts of bad company, without any fear of God or devil, but thought to live in defiance of both, without any reflection on my latter end, no more than if I was to live for ever.

From the north of England, I went to London, my money being almost wasted; but on the road, and while I staid at London, my sins were of another kind, such as keeping bad company, drinking, gaming, swearing, whoring, &c. but I committed no remarkable robbery, till about **J**anuary 1749, when I went into Buckinghamshire, and at a place not far from Whebara Green, I broke open a house and took seven or eight pounds in money, gold rings, &c. I was seized the same day, and sent prisoner to the county gaol at Eglisbury, at the ensuing assizes I was found guilty, and condemned by judge A—— to die; but was reprieved and sent a second time to Virginia; all this happened in the same year. I was sold to a gentleman who loved me very much, and let me live with him as I desired, so that I did what I pleased, and in almost all matters my words were a law to him, so much did he esteem my advice, and indeed I did him all the justice in my power, nor did I wrong him in any thing, except sometimes in giving away drams of rum, to persons whom I respected, without his leave. I was appointed to oversee his negroes, and take account of all that passed in his plantations, besides the chief, and almost all his effects were intrusted to my hands, but in about a year after it pleased God to call him away, and as his estate was not clear, his negroes, slaves, &c. were sold; and as I did not like to live with the executors, I was sold to one who did not treat me like my old master, but on the contrary I was ill used, which did not well agree with me, and this put me on resolving to make my escape, which I soon after attempted, and was away about two days, when I was apprehended,

hended, and brought before a justice of peace, who ordered me to be whipped; and after I had received twenty lashes upon my bare back, I was sent back to my master with a constable; I was before bad, but now ten times worse, so that I could not bear my hard fate, but was resolved to run away again the first opportunity, let what would be the consequence. Accordingly I made a counterfeit pass, and made off, but was in three days taken up and examined, notwithstanding my pass, and kept prisoner till inquiry was made if any master had lost his slave. But after some days, when none claimed or sought after me, I was set at liberty, and then reached Philadelphia, which was at least one hundred and eighty miles off.

WHEN I was within thirty miles of Philadelphia, I was again apprehended and examined before a justice of peace, but now I was safe, and got clear off into Philadelphia. The difficulties and hardships I endured in this journey are almost incredible, and would melt any heart to hear it related; oftentimes I was in the greatest danger, by being obliged to sleep in woods, among the wild beasts and serpents, and sometimes when resting myself have had the dangerous snakes run over me, and besides I have often been obliged to travel three or four days without any thing to eat, and sometimes have gone a whole day without water in that hot country. But however shocking and terrifying this might be, it had no effect on my heart. When I was in Philadelphia I resolved to go to New-York, and having got about ten shillings, it paid my expences till I arrived safe there.

HERE, in company with another, I broke open a house, and took away sixty-five or seventy pounds; but one night, as I was very much in liquor, I was discovered and put into prison with my companion. When we had been confined about a week, we broke out and made our escape to the mountains, and there made the best of our way to Philadelphia; again on our journey we suffered exceedingly, were obliged to lie in the woods all day for fear of being discovered, and travelled all night. Thus we were almost starved, and some days had nothing to eat. One night we came to a house where our hunger made us determine, if possible, to get some victuals, and accordingly we broke in, but found no provision, only about forty or fifty pounds in money, which, though we could neither eat nor drink, we could not forbear taking it, that it might hereafter be of service to us. After two days farther journeying, in which we were so weak with fatigue, that we scarce could move, we came to a house where we got meat and drink, to our great comfort, and now we came forward to the main road between New-York and Philadelphia, where we overtook the new waggon, in which we ventured, and returned within thirty miles of Philadelphia; here we staid some days to refresh ourselves, and then came into the city, and seemed again quite out of danger. But, as I had done often before, I thought little of my deliverance, nor gave any glory to God for saving so evidently my life or averting his judgments, but forgot all my hardships, and entered my bad company afresh, in which I continued to commit many roguish tricks, till again I resolved to go to sea, where I might have done well, could I have rested from my
abominable

abominable vices. But when I was in the island of St. Eustache in the West Indies, I broke open a shop by myself, and stole to the value of fifty pounds, and yet got off undiscovered.

I WENT another voyage to Antigua, from whence, after Christmas 1752, I returned to Wales, and in Haverford-West, in the county of Pembroke, with one Jones a taylor, and William Hill a brick-maker, broke into Mr. Jones's in Bridge-Street, whence I took plate, &c. and which being found upon me, was the means of my coming to this shameful end.

EDWARD LEE.

THIS he wrote the day before he suffered, and a few hours before he went to execution, after his fetters were taken off, he delivered it in the presence of Mr. ——— the sheriff, Mr. Cennick, and Mr. S——.

I HAVE been guilty of much uncleanness, whoredom, &c. and lived wickedly in the sight of the Lord, and sinned with a high hand, and ran into many kinds of sin, I may say all, that of murder excepted, which I never was guilty of, though I have committed crimes as bad, so that I might justly expect no mercy, or forgiveness, and not only the punishment and shame I am to suffer is just, but should death eternal be my portion, and the bitter pains of hell the recompence of my sins, it would be just also. But I do believe there is mercy in store for me still, though I am unworthy of it, but there is forgiveness for me and all others
who

who faithfully ask it of him, whose mercy endures for ever. I hope and believe that God has brought my body to this end, that my soul may be saved, which I pray him to do of his infinite goodness and mercy, though I believe there are many in hell, who have not sinned so much as me. The Lord is merciful and long-suffering, and of great goodness, and will not the death of a sinner, but rather that he would turn from his wickedness and live; and now though they kill my body, yet I believe my soul shall live with God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ, who died for me and all mankind.

EDWARD LEE.

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F I N I S.

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NUNC DIMITTIS.

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22

SOME
LINES

OF THE

REV. MR. CENNICK'S,

(Who departed this Life July 4, 1755.)

Which he had wrote some Time, and carried
with him in his POCKET-BOOK, where they
were found after his Decease.

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NUNC DIMITTIS.

S O M E

L I N E S, &c.

NOW, Lord, in peace with thee and all below,
Let me depart and to thy kingdom go.

As, earnestly, fatigued in journeys, I

Have wish'd to see my town to lodge in, nigh:

So earnestly my weeping eyes I turn

Towards thy house, and languish, pine and mourn.

Nor can I help it, for within I feel

A thirst to see thee, quite insatiable.

'Tis true, thy blessings make my cup run o'er,

I find thy favours daily more and more;

A 2

When

When troubles me afflict and bow me down,
 I never am forsaken or alone :
 Thou kissest all my tears and griefs away,
 Art with me all night long, and all the day.
 I have no doubt that I belong to thee,
 And shall be with thee to eternity.
 This firm my heart believes, as thou art true;
 I am thy pleasant child, thy son, I know.
 But take it not amiss, O be not griev'd,
 I want from pilgrimage to be reliev'd :
 I want to be dissolv'd, and no more here
 A wand'rer be, a banish'd foreigner.
 Sign my dismissal, with a tender sense,
 That thou with my retiring dost dispense.
 I would not thee offend (thou know'st my heart),
 Nor one short day before thy time depart ;
 But I am weary, and dejected too,
 O let me to eternal sabbath go.
 In no chastisement, darkness, or distress,
 In no confusion, but in inward peace,
 With thy full leave and approbation, I
 Entreat to lay my staff and sandals by.

No

No sudden stroke, or violent fever give,
 Which may me of my senses quite bereave;
 Left I should with my lips offend or err,
 Or grieve such tender brethren who are near:
 No; let my fleeting soul, and my last word,
 Confirm my assurance, and exalt my Lord,
 Allow me this, and sign my glad release,
 Let my heart hear thee say, "Depart in peace."
 I long to see thee, Son of Man, and be
 A pardon'd part of thy dear family.

As oft at sea, when wind and tide was fair,
 I've seen the less'ning mountains disappear,
 Exceeding sick, yet glad to move so fast,
 In hopes, ere long, on th' other side to rest;
 Till the glad sailors spy their native shore,
 And the land breezes my lost strength restore;
 Then on the deck how pleased have I seen
 My port, and thought, as if on shore I'd been,
 I see my friends! I kiss them, and partake
 Their welcomes, with their arms about my neck;
 Till all is realiz'd, and on the strand
 Cheerful and thankful, lo! they see me land;
 Then

Then I my sickness and fatigues forget,
 And what I fancied's real and complete:
 Just so I long my passport to receive,
 And have permission this sad world to leave.
 Like some poor wind-bound passenger I wait,
 He thirsts for home, nor food, nor sleep is sweet;
 So I with love-sick anguish, tears and sighs,
 Oft, (my heart melting) look towards the skies,
 No words express the throbbings of my breast,
 To fly away, and ever be at rest.

If I am by, when one in faith expires,
 Or hear their happy exit, it inspires
 My eager soul their footsteps to pursue,
 And fain that night I'd make my exit too;
 I scarce reflect, they now are with the Lamb,
 But down my cheeks the salty riv'lets stream.
 I long to kiss that hand, which once me blest'd;
 Those feet that travell'd to procure my rest;
 Those lips that me confess'd; and that dear head
 That bow'd, when on it all my sins were laid.

O Lamb,

O Lamb, I languish, till that day I see,
 When thou wilt say, "Come up and be with me."
 Now twice sev'n years have I thy servant been,
 Now let me end my service and my sin;
 Forgive all my mistakes, and faults, and shame,
 Neglect, and all things where I've been to blame;
 Let the same kiss my absolution seal,
 And pow'r convey, all what is bruise'd to heal.
 Then loose the silver cord, with gentle pain,
 Whilst I on thy dear bosom smiling lean;
 Let the death-sweat, and sick and fainty chills,
 (With chearing views of the eternal hills)
 And limbs grow cold, and breaking eye-strings tell,
 "But a few moments, and thou shalt be well."
 Thine everlasting arms be underneath,
 Thy bleeding wounds disarm the tyrant death.
 Thy own cold sweat my clam and sweat wipe off,
 Thy cross my bed and pillow then make soft,
 Thy ministers of flaming fire attend,
 And sing me sweetly to my journey's end.
 Them let me hear, then bid my friends adieu,
 Say, to thine honour, "Thou art good and true!"
"I've

"I've overcome! I live for evermore!"

"My sorrows now, and pains and tears are o'er;

"The angels wait—the Saviour calls—farewell,

"I go with him in endless peace to dwell."

Then let my breath grow short, my strength decay,

The rattles low, and pulses die away;

So fall asleep—and soaring, stoop and view

The less'ning world now left and all below;

Meanwhile shall I awake in Jesu's arms,

Above the reach of slanders, wrongs, or harms,

And with my dear acquaintance gone before,

Stay with the Lamb, and go from him no more.

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F I N I S,

